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Rescuers return home
Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu welcomes home members of the IDF rescue team that went to Nairobi, as they arrive at the Lod Air Force Base last night. Stories, Page 2 & 13.
(Yael Somekh/Israel Sun)

'War' expected over division of Swiss settlement

US: Most significant compensation since 1952

By MARILYN HENRY
NEW YORK — The \$1.2 billion settlement with the Swiss banks, which was announced late Wednesday, is the most significant Holocaust compensation agreement since the 1952 reparations accord with West Germany, a senior US official said yesterday.
But while the banks and plaintiffs were basking in feelings of goodwill after more than two years of confrontation, a Jewish reparations source warned: "Now comes the war of the Jews" — a reference to what will likely be a lengthy and conflict-ridden process of distributing the funds from the settlement.
The deal was reached late Wednesday, only weeks before various sanctions against the Swiss were to begin. It was the result of a two-day marathon session between lawyers representing plaintiffs in three class-action suits and the banks, Credit Suisse Group and UBS, along with representatives of the World Jewish Restitution Organization. The session was convened by US District Judge Edward Korman in Brooklyn.
New York City Controller Alan Hevesi announced yesterday that the American public finance officers who had threatened sanctions against the Swiss banks would drop their plans.
The agreement releases the two banks, the Swiss National Bank, other Swiss banks, the Swiss government and Swiss industry from all Holocaust-related claims.
"In the eyes of all involved, this agreement represents full financial and moral restitution," a spokesman for the banks said in a statement.
The commercial banks were accused of hoarding Holocaust-era assets, while the Swiss National Bank was accused of laundering Nazi-looted gold.
The settlement, according to Bobby Brown, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's adviser on Diaspora affairs, is just "the beginning."
"What has happened now with the Swiss puts on notice every country and company that looted Jewish assets. The time has come to look back and have the courage to admit wrong and to try to find justice where none existed before," Brown said yesterday.
However, sources from a variety of quarters said the Swiss settlement is unlikely to compel other governments to accelerate their efforts to restore looted Jewish property.
Instead, sources said, other capitals noted that the Swiss government had not been a party to the talks and did not participate in the settlement.
Swiss insurance firms to follow suit, Page 5
See SWISS, Page 2

Jubilee business conference may attract few participants

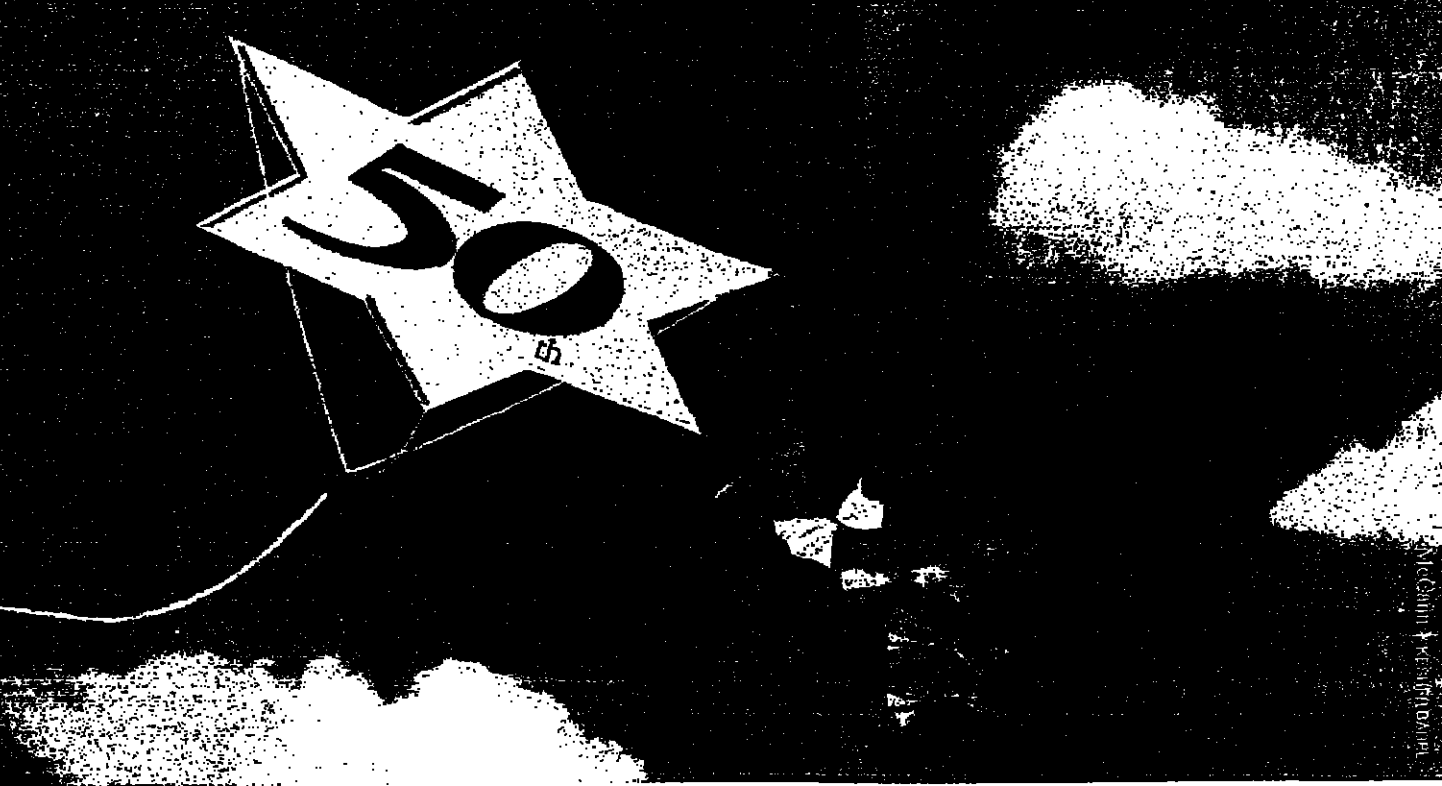
By DAVID HARRIS
The Prime Minister's Jubilee Business Summit, slated to be the financial pinnacle of Israel's 50th anniversary, is likely to attract fewer participants than planned "because it is being managed in the shadow of domestic rows over economic and diplomatic policies," Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert told *The Jerusalem Post*.
More than 2,000 invitations have been distributed worldwide for the conference, scheduled for October 13-15. So far, 115 companies have responded positively; they are to send some 360 representatives.
"It's not so bad at this stage," said one organizer, who pointed out that much of the world is on vacation right now. "But if it gets to September and there's no real pickup, it will be a catastrophe."
Olmert, who organized the 1989 unity government's Prime Minister's Solidarity Conference, said it's vital for Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and the economy that the conference be successful and well-attended, particularly by high-tech companies.
Meanwhile, complaints are rife in various ministries that the event will be a flop because of poor organization.
Senior officials complained that invitations were sent too late for invitees to work the conference into their autumn plans. They also cited a general lack of professional public relations work and poor coordination between relevant ministries and the event's private organizers.
The prime minister's communications director, David Bar-Ilan, yesterday described the press releases put out by Ruth Shitrit Marketing, Advertising and PR as "shoddy" and described one of the statements published in English as "unrecognizable in any language."
See CONFERENCE, Page 2

Software company Memco sold for \$500m.
Platinum Technology of Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois, announced yesterday that it will acquire Tel Aviv-based Memco Software for \$500 million in an exchange of stock, the largest-ever purchase of an Israeli high-tech firm by a foreign company.
Full report, Page 10

Study: This may not be the first global warming

By JUDY SIEGEL
Although scientists have said that the world is getting unprecedentedly warmer due to "greenhouse gases," researchers at the Weizmann Institute have concluded that a sudden warming took place in Africa some 2,000 years ago and lasted for hundreds of years.
The researchers — Prof. Aldo Shemesh of the environmental sciences and energy research department and graduate student Miri Rietti-Shati, with help from Prof. Wibjorn Karlen of the University of Stockholm — went to Mt. Kenya in east Africa to conduct their study.
Their findings have been published in the August 12 issue of *Science*.
They performed an isotopic analysis of sediments from Hausberg Tarn, a small lake 4,350 meters above sea level on a slope of the dormant volcano, whose top is covered by permanent glaciers.
See WARNING, Page 12

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Haifa	7:09 p.m.	8:06 p.m.
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Eilat	6:59 p.m.	8:01 p.m.

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NEWS

in brief

Tadmor suspected of deceiving investors

Discount Investments (DI) general manager Dov Tadmor was questioned this week by Securities Authority investigators on suspicion he published incomplete financial reports that may have deceived investors. Tadmor was brought before the Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court on Tuesday and released on bail. Channel 2 reported last night. Senior DI executives, including Tadmor, allegedly decided to submit full reports to the Securities Authority, but for the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange and for investors, they printed separate incomplete reports. *Itim*

Mordechai seeks lower fare for Jubilee exhibit

Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai yesterday wrote to Doron Shmueli, director of the Jubilee Association, demanding that the admission price to the Jubilee Exhibition in Tel Aviv be reduced "by a significant amount." Tickets currently cost NIS 25 for adults and NIS 14 for children. Lowering the prices would enable more citizens and youth to visit the fair and be impressed by "the strength and spirit of the IDF," according to Mordechai. *Itim*

Victims group offers reward for leads in bombing

The Terror Victims Association is offering a \$100,000 reward to anyone who can provide information that will lead to the capture of the perpetrators of the bombings in East Africa last Friday. Association head Meir Indor has requested permission for planes to drop leaflets advertising the reward in regions where Hamas and Islamic Jihad supporters live. *Itim*

CONFERENCE

Continued from Page 1

Despite that, he claimed the response from abroad has been "spectacular," with many leading business names already confirming their participation.

All Israel's economic attaches were instructed by the Industry and Trade Ministry to follow up on invitations by attempting to persuade CEOs and chairman of major companies to attend the event.

However, one of the event's key organizers said it was only after pressure from the Prime Minister's Office that the embassies "began to lift a finger."

The event's principal organizers, including Bezco Chairman Izzy Tapoohi, the Prime Minister's Office director of economic affairs Yaron Zelikha, and OSKR, the coordinating company, all rejected criticism of the event's organization.

Zelikha said that some of the world's top executives have already agreed to participate. These include the top executives of Nishio Iwai, Boeing, Lockheed Martin, Nestle, Volkswagen, L'Oréal, Siemens, Readymix, American Express, Deutsche Telekom and France Telecom.

"Even if no one else comes, the event will be a big success," Zelikha said.

Of the confirmed participants, 57 are scheduled to receive special prizes from Netanyahu for their contribution to the Israeli economy.

Despite the big names, some in the government remain critical.

One Jerusalem official, while conceding that several foreign government ministers have con-

firmed their participation — principally from eastern Europe and the Far East, with one or two from western Europe — nevertheless complained that "the big names we wanted aren't coming."

A senior Foreign Ministry official said that while his ministry has played a peripheral role in preparing the conference, "I get the impression it's a mess. No one knows who's doing what, the left and right hands seem to be working against each other."

"There seem to be too many private sector interests involved in the organization and there are too many committees involved," he said, referring to the eight committees that were established to prepare for the event.

"There's always a mess with these things until the last minute," a senior Treasury source said.

However, having spoken to OSKR, he said he is under the impression that everything is under control.

"The problem is, that whenever you deal with these things you can't avoid land mines, by not inviting this one or that one, or by involving one economic body in the organization and not another," the source said.

Some of Israel's commercial and economic attaches complained that invitations and brochures which were ready for issue in March did not reach them until June.

"I totally and utterly reject this suggestion," said Zelikha, who maintains the event will be one of the most successful ventures ever undertaken for Israeli business.

Another organizer said this week the summit will be comparable to Davos, the annual meeting in Switzerland of the world's top businesspeople and politicians.

Winning numbers

In yesterday's weekly Payis Hazak drawing, ticket number 389581 won NIS 1.5 million, while ticket number 24322 won the car.

Tickets 836272, 281331, 474762.

222402, 707422, 068923, 855305 and 259100 won NIS 5,000.

Tickets ending in 33645, 90219, 11742, 40424, 02791, 73211, 90902, 89840, 48920, 27329, 10804, 35463, 95038, 78918, 06758, 58168, 14808, 65878 and 82920 won NIS 1,000.

Tickets ending in 044, 676, 439 and 798 won NIS 100. Tickets ending in 46, 45, 24 and 31 won NIS 30.

Tickets ending in 72 and 14 won NIS 15.

Rescue team receives hero's welcome

By DAVID RUDGE

The Home Front Command rescue team returned to Israel last night from Nairobi to virtually a hero's welcome, marred only by Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai's absence at the ceremony.

Mordechai's spokesman, Avi Benayahu, said that Mordechai only learned of the ceremony yesterday morning and was unable to attend. Mordechai asked Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Shaul Mofaz to pass on his congratulations to the team, Benayahu said.

Netanyahu's spokesman, Aviv Bushinsky, said that Netanyahu saw it fitting to personally be there to welcome back the team in a modest ceremony.

Netanyahu, Mofaz, US Ambassador Edward Walker and a senior official of the Kenyan Embassy were at Lod Air Force Base last night to receive them.

Netanyahu praised the members of the rescue team for their sterling efforts in saving lives and for the "great honor" they had brought to Israel and the IDF.

He said their mission in Nairobi was "in my eyes one of the basic foundations of the IDF — to help the victims and the weak in times of distress."

Netanyahu said the rescuers had also helped in the "difficult and determined" war against world terrorism.

"It was not just our war, or that of the US, Kenya or Tanzania, but that of the whole democratic world," said Netanyahu.

He noted that the rescue operation had repaid an old debt to Kenya and its people, who allowed IAF planes to refuel at Nairobi during the Entebbe rescue mission in 1976.

Japhet Getugi, senior representative of the Kenyan Embassy, said at the reception that there were no appropriate words "to convey the anguish and bitterness of the Kenyan people at the loss of lives of loved ones for no crime of their making."

"We condemn in the strongest possible manner the acts of international terrorism, wherever or whenever they occur," said Getugi.

He expressed the hope that the international community would assist in helping to catch the perpetrators of "this cowardly act."

Getugi also praised the work of the IDF rescue team, saying their efforts had earned them international recognition and admiration.

"He who saves a life saves an entire world. Long live Kenyan-Israeli relations," he said.

Walker said President Bill Clinton, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, and the



IDF officers Meital Hallawi (left) and Yafit Uziel, members of the Israeli rescue team in Nairobi, smile for the camera at Lod Air Force Base after returning home yesterday evening. (Yael Sorek/Israel Sam)

American people also expressed their deep appreciation for the work of the rescuers.

OC Home Front Command Maj.-Gen. Gabi Ophir won a lasting round of applause when he said he was proud to command the men and women wearing the yellow helmets of the rescue unit.

The 170 members of the rescue team, including reservists, regular soldiers, doctors and paramedics from the medical corps and seven dogs, specially trained to locate people under debris, arrived in Nairobi and started their work just 23 hours after being given the order to go.

The team, using specialized equipment and knowledge built up over the years, rescued three survivors and recovered 96 bodies from the debris of the buildings destroyed in the car bomb blast in the Kenyan capital.

Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi met with the rescue team for a courtesy call before they left for Israel.

Moi expressed deep appreciation for their work and asked this be conveyed to Netanyahu and the country.

"The Kenyan people and I are full of appreciation for the IDF and Israel," he said.

He said the mutual relations between the two countries, which

have always been special, will be even better now and will be expressed in broadening cooperation with Israel in new fields.

President Ezer Weizman sent a telegram to Mordechai, congratulating him on the rescue mission.

"The military delegation is worthy of the highest praise, for their courage, their achievements, their leadership qualities, and for the determination to carry out their mission which they displayed during their time in Kenya."

"The team has raised the standing of Israel throughout the world," he wrote.

Liat Collins contributed to this report

'I did not allow myself to have any feelings'

By DAVID RUDGE

Despite their tiredness, members of the Home Front Command's rescue unit held their heads up high as they stepped from the IAF 707 that brought them back to Israel last night from Nairobi.

The feeling of pride over their achievements was tinged with sadness, especially because they did not manage to save the life of the Kenyan woman who they all knew as Rose.

"We saw some terrible things but we also

had the satisfaction of knowing that we had done our job and done it well," said dog handler Shlomo Rosen, 43, of Ramat Hasharon.

Rosen, stroking the head of his dog Max, a four-year-old Rotweiler, continued: "I was in Buenos Aires in 1994 with another dog who later died. Since then, I trained this one."

"Max found three people under the rubble and signaled the rescuers by barking over the spoils. One of them was rescued alive, but unfortunately the two others were dead

when they were brought out."

The dog had also helped in the search for Rose. "When we found Rose and discovered that she was dead, it was a great disappointment," Rosen said.

His comments were echoed by Lt. Meital Hallawi, 19, from the Home Front Command's National Rescue Unit.

"What really disappointed us was that she had died about 20 hours before we reached her. If we had been able to locate her precisely beforehand we would have been able to save her. Even so, we managed to remove

her body intact," she said.

Hallawi, who was specially trained as a rescue officer, was confronted for the first time with a real situation and dead bodies, instead of the dolls used in exercises.

"I wasn't really shocked. I just went in there and started working and doing my job as I had been trained to do," Hallawi said.

"Of course, when I saw the first body, it was kind of a shock, but I did not allow myself to have any feelings. I pulled out the body, covered it up and then helped my team to carry the woman out," Hallawi said.

SWISS

Continued from Page 1

In fact, Bern's first official reaction to the settlement made no mention of the Holocaust or Jewish claims.

In its statement, the Swiss Federal Council simply said that it "hopes that this settlement calms the tense situation of recent months and promotes good economic relations."

Under the terms of the settlement, the \$1.25 billion is to be paid over three years. The first installment of \$250 million is to be paid within 90 days. At that time, Korman must give final approval to the pact.

The settlement will be divided among the claimants whose

accounts are identified by the audit of the Volcker Committee, the 31,000 survivors and heirs who are part of the class-action lawsuits, as well as other survivors who would benefit from the so-called "general distribution."

"This is the most significant action in terms of compensation since the German reparations agreement in the early 1950s, and it is important that it be distributed in the widest possible way," US Undersecretary of State Stuart Eizenstat told The Jerusalem Post yesterday.

"What leads me to believe that this will be done in an orderly, seemingly and dignified way is because it will be done under judicial scrutiny," said Eizenstat, who for months had been mediating the talks.

Although Korman will oversee the distribution of the settlement, there is a role for the Jewish organizations.

"Their views on distribution will undoubtedly have heavy weight," Eizenstat said, adding that Israeli survivors will be among those who will benefit.

Eizenstat called on Jewish organizations to reach a prior agreement with the survivors' lawyers.

"It is important that [the plaintiffs'] interests and those represented more broadly by the World Jewish Congress, the World Jewish Restitution Organization and the Jewish Agency be synthesized in a dignified and orderly way... so that we don't have an unseemly disagreement in court about the dis-

tribution," Eizenstat said.

There are concerns about turning over potentially vast sums to the WJRO because of delays in the distribution of the Swiss humanitarian fund. That fund, which was established in March 1997, has some 270 million Swiss francs, most of which is to be distributed by the WJRO among needy survivors.

The first allocations, of \$400 per person, were not made until November 1997 — to some 80 survivors in Latvia.

The system for distributing \$59 million to Israeli survivors is snagged in a dispute between the government and survivors' organizations. The procedure for allocating the \$33 million American share is to be announced next week.

Officials of the Swiss fund lost confidence in the Americans last winter, when the American sur-

vivor organization balked at a "needs test," calling the Swiss fund an "entitlement."

Paul Volcker is overseeing a forensic audit of dormant Swiss accounts, which is scheduled to be completed at the end of the year. The Volcker Committee, which was formed in May 1996 by an agreement between the WJRO and the Swiss Bankers Association, is said to have identified assets worth some \$300m in current dollars.

It is up to Korman to certify who is eligible to benefit as part of the class, and to determine who qualifies for the general distribution.

"Will it be based on need? For all survivors? How do you define survivors?" Eizenstat asked. The definition will "almost certainly be broader" than that used for the German reparations programs, he said.

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Report: Mofaz to recommend disciplinary actions in 'Soujud fiasco'

Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Shaul Mofaz is expected to conduct his summary inquiry today on what has come to be known as the "Soujud fiasco," which occurred Sunday night when a Hizbullah gunman penetrated an IDF outpost in the security zone and escaped alive.

OC Northern Command Maj.-Gen. Gaby Ashkenazi has completed his investigation into the incident and forwarded his report to Mofaz. In addition to examining the report, Mofaz will talk with the soldiers involved and senior Northern Command officers, and then decide how to proceed.

Channel 1 reported last night, however, that Mofaz is expected to accept the recommendations on disciplinary actions made in the Northern Command report.

Mofaz's conclusions will then go to Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai for his review.

The incident led to serious criticism of the paratroopers who were manning the outpost, who, many believe, should have killed or at least captured the gunman.

IDF officers are said to be tense in anticipation of Mofaz's conclusions.

President Ezer Weizman, meanwhile, spoke out yesterday against those who criticized the paratroopers.

Speaking at Sieff Hospital in Safed, after visiting Lt. Michael Shibi, who was wounded Tuesday by mortar fire at the Beaufort Castle position, Weizman maintained there was no eroding of the army's abilities and that unnecessary criticism should be withheld.

"When you sit in a position for a long time it turns into a clear target for whoever wants to do you in. It happened to us at the canal, but we don't have to draw conclusions regarding all the paratroopers from what happened at the outpost in Lebanon."

"It's not right and it borders on sensationalism. We have an excellent army, excellent youth and we have to respect these fighters doing the hard work in Lebanon."

"I want to see those same critics, if they had an encounter with a Hizbullah guy, who surprised them, pouncing on them and opening fire."

IAF warplanes attacked suspected Hizbullah positions in south Lebanon yesterday. The IDF spokesman reported that the planes returned safely.

(Itim)

Barak: Unity gov't no longer on agenda

By MICHAEL YUDELMAN

Labor Party leader Ehud Barak announced yesterday that a national unity government is no longer on the agenda and Labor will give top priority to advancing the elections.

"The groping towards a national unity government is over. We're striving for early elections," Barak said, in his first public statement on the issue since the secret talks between himself and Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu were revealed four days ago.

Barak, who spoke at Labor's executive meeting, said "Netanyahu understood we would not enter into a serious discussion of a unity government without a constitutional earthquake, which would enable a true power sharing between the two large parties."

"Since this didn't reach the point of a real debate, a unity government is no longer on the agenda, and it's no accident."

Barak said Labor's position and his own is clear: "we believe in early elections. The government has come to the end of its path."

However, Barak did not rule out the possibility of discussing a unity government in the future, if the prime minister asks Labor to do so.

MK Shimon Peres said at the meeting that before acting to advance elections, the legislation to abolish the direct elections for prime minister must be advanced.

MK Yossi Beilin canceled the gathering of MKs he had planned this afternoon, to discuss ways of preventing a unity government,

after Barak made it clear to him that the issue was no longer relevant.

"There's no point in holding the gathering now. But if the subject comes up again, our group is large enough to fight against joining a unity government and strengthening Netanyahu's government," Beilin said.

Beilin expressed full support in Barak and his leadership, stressing he would not take part in any move or organization trying to replace Barak before the elections.

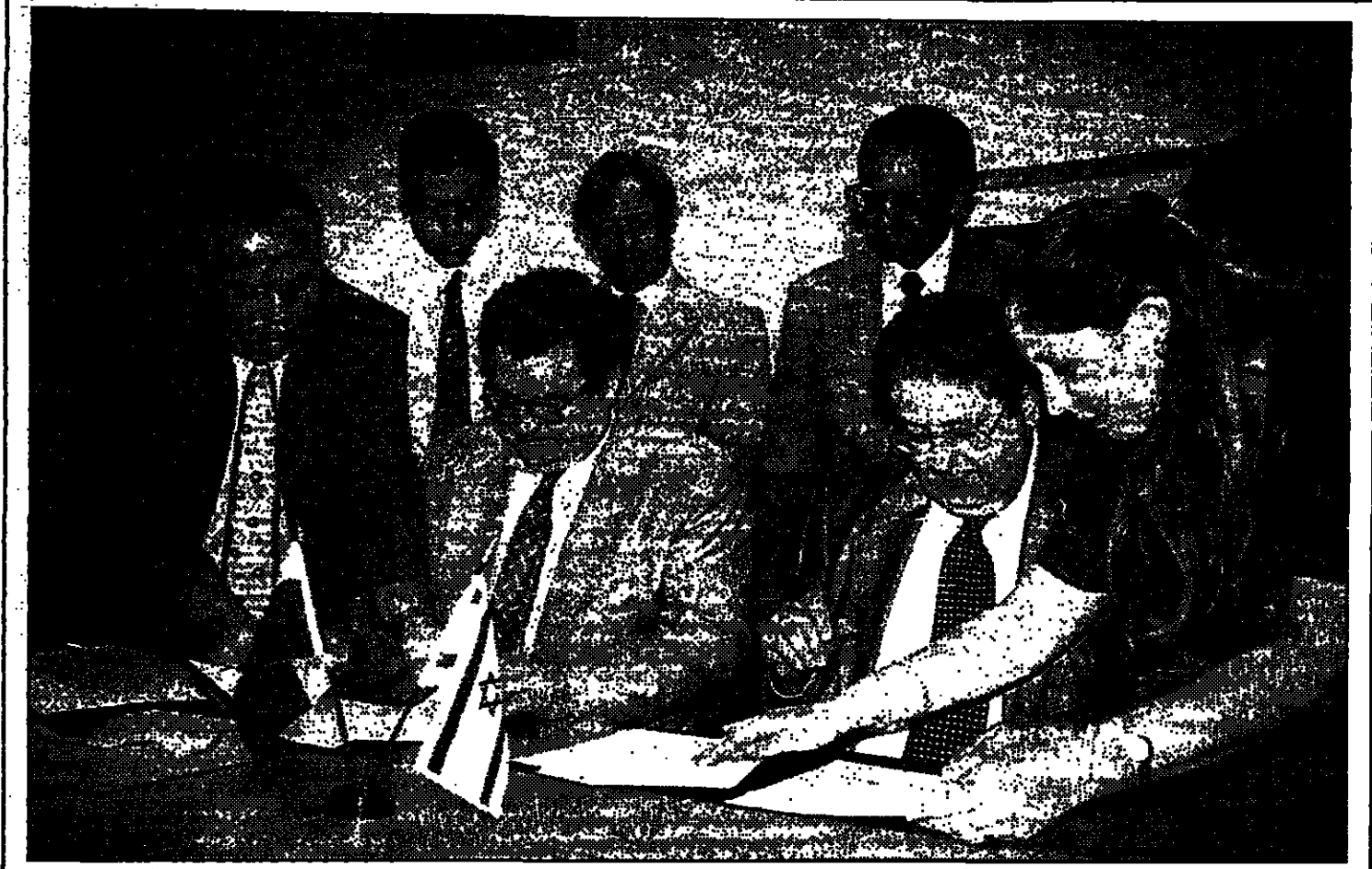
"Barak is the elected leader of the party. There are not many Ehud Baraks in Labor, or in the State of Israel. If this man becomes prime minister, there will be peace. Therefore I'll do everything I can so that he is the next prime minister of Israel," he said.

MK Hagai Merom, who also objects to a unity government, said he was satisfied by Barak's statements.

Science Minister Silvan Shalom said yesterday in Beersheba that the importance of peace process and the unemployment situation justified the establishment of a national unity government.

President Ezer Weizman called yesterday for advancing the elections, saying doesn't believe there will be a national unity government.

Visiting a wounded soldier in Sieff Hospital in Safed, Weizman said: "There is a Knesset decision. We have to carry it out. I don't think there will be a national unity government. If there is one, we will welcome it and help it survive."



Training agreement signed
Foreign Ministry Director-General Eytan Bentsur (seated, right) and Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Yuri Zolakov (seated, left) sign a cooperation agreement in Jerusalem yesterday on training diplomats and language education. (Yitzhak Eliahu/Scoop 80)

Meretz checking Sarid option

The Meretz executive yesterday decided to examine the implications of fielding the party's leader, MK Yossi Sarid, for prime minister in the next elections.

The executive set up a committee, headed by MK Ran Cohen, to look into the matter.

Executive chairman MK Amnon Rubinstein said Meretz must prepare for the possibility that it will have to confront the Likud and Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu on its own in the elections, in view of Labor's talks with Netanyahu on a national unity government.

"This leadership must be replaced by elections, not by negotiations on joining his government. Bibi must be toppled, not saved," Rubinstein said at the executive meeting.

At a Likud executive meeting yesterday, MK Uzi Landau called on the Left to support Sarid as candidate for prime minister.

"It's possible to agree with or oppose Sarid, but at least he knows what he wants. With Barak, his positions tremble like jelly," said Landau.

Michal Yudelman

PM's Office: No agreement on defense allocation

By DAVID HARRIS

The size of the Defense Ministry's 1999 budget has not been agreed on yet, the Prime Minister's Office, Defense Ministry and Treasury said yesterday.

They were responding to a report in *Ha'aretz* which claimed Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai had decided on an additional NIS 5 billion spending package for the military over the next five years, with the first NIS 1b. becoming available in 1999. During this week's cabinet debate on the state budget for next year, Netanyahu indicated there would be extra funding for the defense establishment.

Following a meeting between Netanyahu and Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman, the Treasury issued a statement which said "the prime minister said the sums relevant to the defense budget have been neither defined nor fixed."

A similar statement from the Prime Minister's Office was not as clear cut, but spokesman Ofir Akonin confirmed nothing had been finalized.

The Defense Ministry told *The Jerusalem Post* last night "there is no decision whatsoever on the size and scope of the addition [to the ministry's budget] and/or how

1999 Budget

it is to be allocated."

In the wake of recent media criticism of permanent army staff demands for pay increases, Netanyahu last night called for an end to the public outcry about the issue.

"This isn't a subject for a political goring," he said. "The army regulars work day and night to ensure Israeli citizens live in their country in security and quiet and for that they are entitled to some gratitude."

However, he added, the additional spending package is for specific strategic needs of the IDF "in the light of threats to the State of Israel."

The Treasury-based state budget director, David Milgrom, yesterday told reporters the discussions on the defense budget also are centering on the need for the IDF to implement efficiencies, something which former deputy defense minister Silvan Shalom said this week it is perfectly possible to do.

"As has been said, there will be additional spending, but there is also a need for the Defense Ministry to save money, implement efficiency measures and reduce expenditure," Milgrom said. "We will present this as part

By STEVE RODAN, MOHAMMED NAJIB and Itim

Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat cut short a visit to South Africa yesterday for "security reasons" and returned to Gaza a day before expected.

Meanwhile, Palestinian legislator Salah Taamari, who was appointed a PA minister without portfolio and given the responsibility of monitoring Jewish settlements, has decided not to take up his post, Palestinian sources said yesterday.

A South African foreign ministry spokesman in Johannesburg declined to elaborate on the decision to shorten Arafat's visit, saying only that it was "taken due to security reasons." He did not elaborate.

Arafat said upon his return that

Arafat cuts short South Africa visit for 'security' reasons

the peace process is in grave condition because of Israeli settlement activity and non-implementation of agreements.

He called for the advancement of a Franco-Egyptian initiative based on the convening of an international conference.

While in South Africa, Arafat addressed the parliament, where he accused Israel of "dragging the Middle East to 'violence, anarchy, war and destruction'" and called for international pressure on the government of Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu.

Taamari, from the Bethlehem area, was one of some 10 new members chosen for the cabinet from the Palestinian Legislative Council last week.

The sources said Taamari did not attend the swearing-in ceremony of the new cabinet in Gaza

on Sunday night. Since then, he has not appeared at any official sessions and has informed the PA that he does not want to enter the cabinet.

PLC member Hussam Khader confirmed that Taamari has quit the cabinet. Taamari could not be reached for comment.

Palestinian sources said many of the new ministers have maintained a silence since the cabinet was sworn in on Sunday. They said many constituents have been angered by their acceptance of a post in Arafat's new cabinet.

Last week, Higher Education Minister Hanan Ashrawi, appointed as tourism minister, and Agriculture Minister Abdul Jawad Salah, named as minister without portfolio, announced they would not serve in the new cabinet.

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A-G condemns threat against judge

Bullet found in purse of judge who released suspect in Beduin shooting

By LIAT COLLINS

Attorney-General Eliyahu Rubinstein has condemned the threat against Beersheba Magistrate's Court Judge Hanna Slotki, who found a bullet in her bag on Wednesday.

Slotki last week released on NIS 10,000 bail the Nature Protection and National Parks Authority warden suspected of fatally shooting a 22-year-old Beduin man, Suleiman Jildan. He had illegally entered a closed military area which is also part of a nature reserve.

"A country in which judges doing their job are open to this type of danger should do some soul-searching," Rubinstein said.

He said that public figures and leaders should be careful about what they say in a charged atmosphere, to ensure that their words are not interpreted as encouragement of violence. Rubinstein was apparently referring to Beduin leaders including MK Taleb A-Sanaa (Arab Democratic Party) who at a press conference this week called for vengeance for the shooting.



Judge Hanna Slotki outside her home yesterday. (Avi Mahal)

President Ezer Weizman refused to comment yesterday on the bullet incident. But, during a visit to Safed, he said the state needs to improve the living conditions of the Beduin. "We should start building them cities and advancing the conditions for the 40 percent of them that still live in shacks," he said.

Rubinstein said the circum-

stances surrounding the man's death would be fully investigated. "The feelings of sorrow of the Beduin public are understandable but do not justify in any way violence or the threat of violence," he said.

Meanwhile, the head of the Police Investigations Branch, Cmdr. Yossi Sidbon, has at Rubinstein's request instructed southern region police to open an investigation about A-Sanaa's statements. The police will ask Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon to start the procedure to lift A-Sanaa's parliamentary immunity so he can be called in for questioning.

At a press conference on Sunday, A-Sanaa said: "We have our own laws. In the Beduin tradition there is a concept of revenge and the murderer pays with his life. No Beduin in the Negev will allow his blood to be spilled with impunity."

A-Sanaa yesterday condemned the threat on the judge while noting that there is no evidence tying it to the Beduin community.

"People are trying to attribute the placing of the bullet in Judge



Beduin protest outside a Beersheba court yesterday against the release on bail of the man suspected of fatally shooting a Beduin, Suleiman Jildan. The sign in the center reads: 'Israeli law has decided: An Arab equals NIS 10,000.' (Avi Mahal)

Slotki's bag to the Beduin and this is very serious. After all, in order to reach her bag one must pass so many security checks in the court. It is still not known who put the bullet there. It could be criminals

who were sentenced by her and who are not pleased with the results of the court case," A-Sanaa said.

"At any rate, it makes no difference who did this serious thing, I

completely condemn it. In a law-abiding country, a judge cannot carry out his work under threats," he added.

Some 200 Beduin held a protest march yesterday morning between

the Beersheba regional office of the Agriculture Ministry and the local courthouses.

Among the slogans they chanted was: "In blood and spirit we will avenge you, martyr."

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הכרזת מלחמה

Swiss insurance companies ready to pay Holocaust claims

ZURICH (Reuters) - Swiss insurers said yesterday that Holocaust victims also would be compensated for any unpaid life insurance policies, after big Swiss banks agreed on a \$1.25 billion settlement for unreturned World War II-era wealth.

"There might be unclaimed life policies, and if there are people who are beneficiaries of these life policies, I am sure no insurance company would be unwilling to pay," said a spokeswoman for the Swiss insurance giant, Zurich.

Swiss insurance companies were not covered in the deal UBS AG and Credit Suisse Group hammered out in New York in two days of negotiations with lawyers representing Holocaust victims and the World Jewish Congress.

Several of Europe's most prominent insurers also are being investigated by US insurance regulators - and being sued in a US court - over allegations they withheld policies sold to Jewish customers and others persecuted by the Nazis.

Zurich's Swiss rival Baloise noted that the Nazis had confiscated many policies that were subsequently settled with a 150b. mark compensation by the German government. But it conceded some might have fallen through the net.

"I do not want to rule out that there are claims which have not been settled," a spokesman said, but added that the difficulty now lay in identifying them.

Swiss officials yesterday greeted the deal with a mixture of relief and wariness about who would end up footing the bill. The banks said they assumed other Swiss companies and institutions would help finance the payment, which

averts the threat of Swiss bank boycotts by US states and cities.

"We have always said that we were negotiating on our own behalf, but we must clearly note that no solution can be reached without bringing in the various parties that have been involved," said Bernhard Stettler, spokesman for UBS AG.

"We expect that those addressed will show their appreciation," he told Swiss radio.

The Swiss National Bank, criticized for its wartime purchases of looted gold from Nazi Germany, was non-committal about prospects that it would contribute to the settlement that also gets it off the hook of a lawsuit.

Industry groups took a similar cautious line, saying they needed time to review the deal before deciding how to respond.

Coalition politicians in Bern had mixed emotions about the accord, which helps patch up ties with Washington that were strained by the prospect of US boycotts of Swiss banks.

Two of Germany's biggest commercial banks, the focus of a New York lawsuit by Holocaust survivors, said yesterday that the Swiss banks' deal did not set a precedent and that the class action suit against the Swiss banks and the one against the German banks were not comparable.

Holocaust survivors filed a \$18 billion class action lawsuit against Deutsche Bank and Dresdner Bank in June, accusing them of working with the Nazis before and during World War II.

They charged that the banks had knowingly traded in looted personal property, including jewelry, coins and dental work plundered from Jews murdered in



Senator Alfonse D'Amato, left, and former Swiss bank employee Christoph Meili flank 73-year-old Holocaust survivor Estelle Sapir of New York outside the US Courthouse in New York after Wednesday's settlement was reached. Meili rescued Holocaust-related documents from a shredder at the Union Bank of Switzerland in Zurich in January 1997.

death camp.

While reiterating their position that they shared moral responsibility during the Nazi era, both German banks argued that, unlike

Switzerland, Germany had paid reparations after 1945 - of which official figures show Bonn has paid more than 100 million marks.

Deutsche and Dresdner said they were still in discussions with representatives from Jewish organizations and the World Jewish Congress over the law suit.

Jewish leaders optimistic about Swiss settlement offer

By AMY KLEIN, DOUGLAS DAVIS and news agencies

World Jewish organization leaders reacted with cautious optimism to the Swiss commercial banks' settlement offer of \$1.25 billion to resolve a lawsuit that they failed to return Jewish assets to Holocaust survivors and their heirs.

The settlement, by UBS AG and Credit Suisse Group, still must be approved by US District Judge Edward Korman, who has not said when he will do so, news agencies reported.

Avraham Burg, co-chairman of the World Jewish Restitution Organization, said he applauds the settlement but hopes the Swiss will learn from this and resolve the outstanding issues.

Burg said that he and his colleagues - Edgar Bronfman and Israel Singer - will continue the fight.

"We will not rest until we are convinced that all those who participated in the looting of Jewish property during that horrible period in history will return the loot to the legal owners," he said.

The Board of Deputies of British Jews had a similar reaction.

"We welcome the settlement which completes the financial restitution owing to Holocaust survivors and their families," said director-general Neville Nagler, but he said he hopes issues relating to looted art treasures and outstanding insurance policies are resolved quickly.

Lord Janner of Braunstone, chairman of the London-based Holocaust Educational Trust, who spearheaded the campaign that led to last December's landmark Nazi Gold Conference in London, called the agreement "a worthy settlement of a tragic dispute" and described the outcome as "a signal victory for justice."

The first payment of \$250 million will be made 90 days after Judge Korman grants his approval. The next payments, of \$333m, each, will be paid on the first, second and third anniversary of Korman's approval.

The judge and the plaintiffs' lawyers will develop a distribution plan to determine how the money will reach the plaintiffs and others. More than 31,000 people have

been named plaintiffs in the lawsuit.

After the money is distributed among the plaintiffs, the remaining money should be distributed to organizations caring for Holocaust survivors, said Benjamin Navon, executive director of Amcha, an Israeli organization that provides social and psychological services to Holocaust survivors and their children.

There are 360,000 survivors in Israel and about 100,000 in the US, he said. Most of them are between the ages 60-80, very lonely and often childless.

Yad Vashem chairman Avner Shalev called the agreement a fulfillment of an obligation to the Jewish people.

"This is an agreement with historic ramifications because it indicates a deep change in the attitude of various elements in Europe to the Holocaust," he said.

California Treasurer Matt Fong, one of the first state officials to impose sanctions on Swiss banks, also hailed the agreement.

Tom Tugend contributed to this report.

Swiss public surprised at size of Holocaust payment agreement

ZURICH (Reuters) - Swiss people were split yesterday on whether to welcome an overnight \$1.25 billion settlement by the country's two banking giants for Holocaust-era claims.

In random interviews conducted on the streets of Switzerland's financial capital, some voiced surprise that the settlement was twice the initial \$600 million the banks were offering.

"It's hard to say whether this should be welcomed because we still don't know how many of those actually affected [by the Holocaust] will benefit," said Michael Wawersik, a 36-year-old Swiss lawyer.

"It's a huge sum and I am surprised it's so much higher than the one tipped at the beginning. But obviously it was worth it for the banks."

"I am sure that it was a tactical move aimed at bringing the whole issue to a speedy conclusion before anything else crawled out of the woodwork," Wawersik said.

"I don't think it's positive," said one Swiss pensioner, who declined to be named. "It's too much."

"It's terrible, excessive, a cheek," said 65-year-old Lisa Neukomm.

"It's twice what was expected and is a loss of face for Switzerland. Of course the banks wanted to avoid any boycotts. But this is shameful."

"It was the right thing to do," said Heinz Hofer, 48, a Zurich barber.

"They should finally hand it over. But what took so long? It was clear they would have to pay."

"You know what banks are like - they say 'We'll only pay \$600 million, and that is our final offer.' I suppose the whole thing was no longer a sure thing. 'I'd like to know who's really going to get the money,' said one 30-year-old photographer. "But if there are unpaid claims worth \$1.25 billion, of course they should be paid."

NEWS

in brief

Terrorist gets two life sentences

The Adoraim Military Court gave two life sentences to Hamas activist Aniah Abu-Aisav, of Hebron, for his involvement in several terror attacks in which three Israelis were killed and others were wounded.

In May 1994, Abu-Aisav took part in an attack near Beit Haggai in which Margalit Ruth Shohat and Raphael Yairi were killed and Yael Shohat was wounded.

A month later, he wounded an IDF soldier in Hebron.

He also was involved in the drive-by shooting at the entrance to Kiryat Arba in which Sarit Prigal was murdered and her father and brother were wounded on July 7, 1994.

Itim

Dogs removed from substandard pound

Eight of the dogs held in substandard conditions in a storeroom at the Nahariya municipal pound were transferred to the shelter of the Haifa Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals yesterday on the orders of the Environment and Agriculture ministries. A large number of the animals were put to sleep after the veterinary services determined they were too sick to be saved.

The Environment Ministry has filed a police complaint against the municipality citing violations of the Anti-Cruelty to Animals Law and the municipality has informed the city vet and kennel-man that they are being fired for gross neglect. Agriculture and Environment Minister Raphael Eitan has asked the ministry veterinarian in charge of enforcing anti-abuse laws to inspect all municipal pounds nationwide and submit a detailed report.

Liat Collins

Ministry finishes grading matriculation exams

The matriculation exams for last year have all been marked and pupils will receive their grades the first week of this school year, Moshe Deklo, head of the Education Ministry's testing department, told ministry director-general Ben-Zion Dell yesterday.

A total of 950,000 test booklets were submitted, including some 120,000 from the Arab sector and 20,000 from the Druse sector.

The ministry is holding on to more than 5,700 exam booklets while it checks whether those students cheated. So far, 330 students have been caught cheating on last year's matriculation exams.

Itim

TAU professor wins Stockholm Water Prize

Tel Aviv University professor Gideon Dagan, a groundwater expert, yesterday received the 1998 Stockholm Water Prize from Swedish King Carl XVI Gustaf.

The \$150,000 prize is the world's premier award for water quality protection. Dagan's research concerns the relationship between pollutants, subsurface formations, transport processes and groundwater. It has applications for restoring and protecting groundwater.

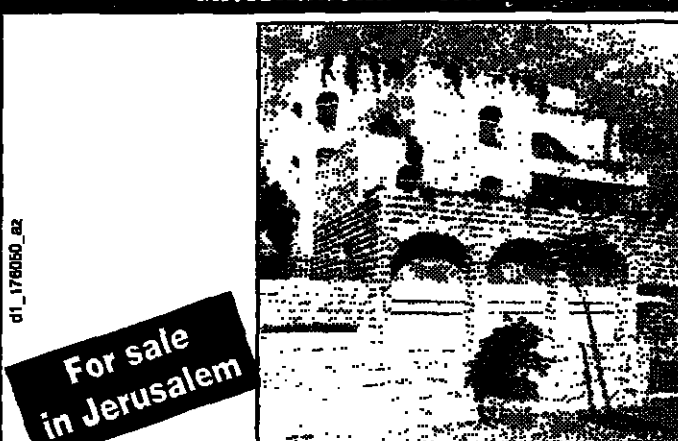
Itim

Four injured in collision

Four people were injured - two seriously and two moderately - in a collision yesterday at the entrance to Moshav Hemed. A commercial vehicle hit a truck turning left into the moshav. Magen David Adom crews took the injured to Sheba Hospital at Tel Hashomer and Tel Aviv's Ichilov Hospital.

Traffic police are investigating the cause of the accident. Itim

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Students and Pupils Administration

Notice to Immigrant Students Eligible for Rights from the Administration

Tuition payment authorizations from the Administration, for the 1998/99 academic year, for eligible immigrants who have been in Israel for some time, will be available at the Students Administration district offices from September 1998.

Spluttering for Britannia

We know no spectacle so ridiculous as the British public in one of its periodic fits of morality, wrote Baron Thomas Macaulay in 1830.

These days it is mostly Americans that amuse the rest of us with their moral convulsions — whining to Ricki Lake, bleating to Oprah Winfrey, slugging it out with righteous indignation for Gerry Springer.

"They want to put Clinton on trial for having an affair?" said an outraged Frenchwoman on television this week. "What are they going to charge him with next — having lunch?"

But back to Britain, where one of Macaulay's periodic fits appears to have arrived with a burst of summer. Post-Macaulay it has been the great John Cleese who has so often and so ably demonstrated that there is nothing quite so funny as a pompous Englishman spluttering in moral outrage.

Spluttering goes well with alliteration, which may explain why priests, porn, police and pedophiles have been filling this week's British headlines. It's not an unattributed joke, but four separate issues — although, of course, pornographic pedophile priests are not unheard of in police circles.

Oh sinner man

The priest, or rather bishop, in question is Eamonn Casey and the tabloid media began huffing in mock outrage before the poor man had even left New York on his way to London.

Casey, the 71-year-old former bishop of Galway in Ireland, was neither pedophile nor pornographer — just an old-fashioned sinner-man. But he stunned both his church and the Irish nation six years ago by admitting that he had a son through a clandestine affair with an American woman.

Priests have sinned before, but the bishop laid the whole church open to accusations of hypocritical moral teaching. Like an erring diplomat posted to Chad, the uncelibate bishop was dispatched by the Vatican on "a five-year contract" to a remote mission station in Ecuador.

He's back in civilization (if London can be so called) and the spluttering of the press over his presence seems utterly ludicrous. The bishop's very human transgression has long since been overtaken by a rash of priest-women revelations and, much more seriously, by child molesting scandals that have sent several priests to jail while Casey has been "away."

Pass the pora

Fits of morality about pedophilia are more justified and less funny, though the serious question of what to do about former offenders is being obscured by trashy newspapers.

British ones have followed a recent trend by their American counterparts to "out" convicted sex offenders trying to live quietly in new locations after serving their jail time. The aim is to get colorful indignation from

outraged citizens — "We don't want no bloody pervers in this town."

When it comes to outraged citizens, however, it seems one man's perversion is another's relaxation.

Speaking on the publication of his last annual report before retiring, the chief British movie censor said this week there is no difference between pornography and Viagra.

"Next month we have Viagra coming [to Britain]. That makes you sexually aroused, which is exactly what pornography has always done. Why should it be that you are allowed to be chemically aroused but not visually? We have been too strict in this country."

Splutter, splutter! You betcha. The National Viewers' and Listeners' Association, an innocuous sounding but powerful "decency" pressure group, tore into James Ferman, the director of the British Board of Film Classification, and called for even stricter measures against sexual entertainment.

Little was heard of Ferman's contention that violence (including rape) in movies is the real obscenity that ought to worry society, not private recreational sex.

Men of straw

In a veiled swipe at the moral crusade by current Home Secretary Jack Straw, Ferman said: "Of all the home secretaries I have dealt with, Willie Whitelaw and Douglas Hurd were the best, because they were men of the world who took a laid-back attitude. They took the view that man is naturally sinful."

Was that a distant cheer from Bishop Casey, lying low somewhere else in the sinful city?

Ferman won unexpected support from the police for scrapping restrictions on non-abusive pornography, if only because the laws are too vague to be enforced.

The police seemed determined to draw out all the righteous indignation at once. Liberty, a human rights and civil liberties group, is already indignant over plans to widen the use of what is called multi-agency questioning at police roadblocks.

Police discovered during anti-IRA security alerts in the past that random roadblocks net a fine crop of ordinary crooks, too. And when they called in other agencies to ask questions — customs, vehicle inspectors, social benefits detectives, the driver licensing agency, immigration — the haul of baddies multiplied tremendously.

It all sounds very ominous to civil libertarians. But they should also keep an eye on the government franchise office, which this week rapped Britain's privatized trains for failing to run on time. They must be made to do so at once!

Is this British government socialist, or what? I think we should be told.

Column One



Thomas O'Dwyer



The face of famine

A malnourished boy is given a bath in Wau, Sudan, only minutes before he died. More than 70,000 refugees, mostly women and children, have come to Wau in search of food and shelter, as famine once again visits southern Sudan.

(AP)

Hopes rise for talks to end Kosovo crisis

PRISTINA, Serbia (Reuters) — Efforts to organize peace talks in Kosovo appeared to make some progress yesterday as fighting continued in the restive Serbian province.

The ethnic Albanian newspaper *Koha Ditore*, known to have close links to Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) guerrillas, said it received a KLA fax naming Adem Demaqi as its representative on an ethnic Albanian delegation for talks with Belgrade.

Receipt of the fax was made known to Western journalists by newspaper sources amid indications from local media, ethnic Albanian and diplomatic sources that an ethnic Albanian negotiating team could be identified later in the day.

Demaqi is a legendary figure among ethnic Albanians. His 28 years in jail have earned him a reputation as the "Nelson Mandela of Kosovo."

Naming a KLA representative to negotiate with Belgrade along with other ethnic Albanians would be the first time that the KLA, which has been fighting a six-month battle for Kosovo independence, has agreed to talks with Serbian authorities.

Ethnic Albanians, led by the community's elected president Ibrahim Rugova, rejected talks with the Serbian leadership in June, saying there could be no negotiations until Belgrade pulled its special police units out of Kosovo, whose population of two million people is 90 percent ethnic Albanian.

Meanwhile, fighting continued in western Kosovo where Serbian forces are trying to stamp out the last pockets of ethnic Albanian rebels.

The Serb Media Center in the provincial capital Pristina denied radio reports that the key rebel stronghold of Junik, close to the Albanian border, had fallen after a siege of nearly two weeks.

But the center said mopping-up continued in western areas of Serbia's southernmost province, where a three-week-long offensive by security forces has largely swept away KLA rebels.

"There is no attack on Junik today," said a spokesman of the Serbian-run media center. "In fact, not a single bullet has been fired on Junik for the past 10 to 15 days," he said, adding that police had surrounded the town but civilians were free to leave.

On Wednesday, the EU condemned the siege of Junik. But Serb security sources said that, far from being confined, civilians were being urged by police to leave the town.

Court to Starr: Meetings with journalists not confidential

By KAREN GULLO

WASHINGTON (AP) — Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr, in an unsuccessful bid to stop a judge's investigation into alleged grand jury leaks, has suggested that his conversations with reporters should be treated the same as those with confidential informers.

Starr argued to an appeals court that disclosing evidence of his office's contacts with reporters about the Monica Lewinsky investigation would mean "revealing confidential investigative information," court documents now made public show.

However, his argument was rejected when the three-judge court allowed a district court to proceed with her leaks investigation.

Meanwhile, four Secret Service officers entered the federal courthouse today to testify before the grand jury gathering evidence in the Lewinsky matter.

To bolster his argument in the leaks case, Starr cited a 1981 court case that established an "informer's privilege" that allows the government to keep secret the identity of a person who furnishes information about criminal activities to protect them from possible retribution.

"Long recognized at common law, the informer's privilege serves important individual and societal interests in protecting the anonymity of citizens who cooperate in law enforcement," Starr wrote in quoting the 17-year-old case.

He was seeking to block an order by US District Judge Norma Holloway Johnson that he turn over evidence of his office's contacts with reporters in the investigation of alleged presidential sex and

cover-up. Sections of his arguments were blacked out in the court papers released last week that detail the secretly fought battle with President Clinton's lawyers over alleged leaks.

Charles Bakaly, Starr's spokesman, declined comment Wednesday.

But legal sources outside the prosecutor's office, who are familiar with the proceedings and spoke on condition of anonymity, said Starr specifically applied the argument to reporters, saying he wanted to keep confidential the information received from reporters and their identities.

It's not unusual for reporters to provide information to law enforcement sources, especially in the process of gathering information and confirming facts, media experts agree. But they warned that the practice can raise ethical questions.

"Sometimes reporters serve as intermediaries for news sources," said Herbert Strenz, a media law professor at Drake University. "If they have an agenda or are trying to accomplish a goal, to get in favor with prosecutors, that's where you invite abuse."

Clinton's personal attorney, David Kendall, who prompted the leak investigation by complaining to Johnson, scoffed at Starr's argument that reporters should be treated the same as informers.

In his reply to the court, Kendall said most of the examples that Johnson found were evidence of improper leaks occurred at a time early in the Lewinsky investigation when prosecutors, not reporters, possessed the most information.

'Boston Globe' criticized over 'double standard'

BOSTON (AP) — The Boston branch of the NAACP is accusing *The Boston Globe* of practicing a double standard for suspending white columnist Mike Barnicle just weeks after forcing out a black female columnist.

The newspaper also came under criticism by members of its staff and in an essay yesterday by the editorial page editor of *The New York Times*, which is owned by the same company.

The Globe first suspended Barnicle, then asked for his resignation after it was revealed that one of his columns contained unattributed jokes from a comedian's book. Barnicle refused to resign and the paper agreed

Tuesday to let him stay after he serves a two-month suspension without pay.

The controversy came less than two months after *The Globe* asked for — and received — the resignation of columnist Patricia Smith, who admitted to fabricating characters and quotations.

"It is clearly a double standard that has both racial and gender implications," said Wednesday's statement from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Vanessa Williams, president of the National Association of Black Journalists, called *The Globe's* decision "disgraceful."

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Kimberly Lindy
Alona & Maya Rosenblum

סדרה מן הארץ

Five suspects held in Kenya bomb probe

NAIROBI — Kenyan police and FBI agents announced yesterday that they were questioning five people in connection with last week's bombing of the US Embassy in Nairobi that killed at least 247 people and injured 5,000.

News of the arrests and word of the discovery of possibly vital evidence came as a huge international investigation began into the Nairobi blast and another, almost simultaneous, blast at the American mission in the Tanzanian capital Dar es Salaam in which 10 died and over 70 were hurt.

"We have a total of about five... actually five," Peter Mbuvi of Kenya's Criminal Investigations Department told a joint news conference with the FBI. "We have not yet decided if we will charge them — investigations are still in the initial stage."

A senior government source said, however, that those arrested were not considered prime suspects, adding "the case has a long way to go."

Mbuvi declined to name those detained or reveal their nationalities, but said one had been pointed out to the police by an American citizen and arrested immediately after the blast.

Tanzanian police are holding 13 foreigners — six Iraqis, six Sudanese and a Turk — in their investigation, but so far none has been charged.

Sheila Horan, head of the FBI's operation in Kenya, told the news conference that investigators believed they had identified parts of the vehicle used in the Nairobi attack.

Horan said it would take "puzzling detective work" to

piece together all the evidence and clues from the bomb site, but agents were determined to complete their task "however long it takes." The investigation, she said, would be a joint one, with each FBI agent working with a Kenyan officer at all times.

A curiously worded statement by Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi, made on Wednesday night, suggested he was starting to take note of a growing wave of resentment at what some Kenyans see as US discrimination immediately after the blast.

Critics accuse US authorities of showing a lack of regard for Kenyan victims as they struggled to save their own people in the blast area.

"The government is grateful that many Kenyans, especially members of the public, have provided and continue to provide useful information to the various branches of the Kenya police who are in charge of these investigations," the statement said. The words "Kenyans" and "Kenya police" were capitalized.

Local newspapers said the bodies of 10 white Americans and a citizen of Asian extraction were taken to a private mortuary, while those of Kenyan staff were dumped in the city mortuary.

The body of the 12th American, who was black, was recovered from the pile of Kenyan corpses three days later, they said.

US Ambassador Prudence Bushnell denied the accusations. "Our house was on fire... our children were in danger," she told KTN television on Wednesday night. "We were rescuing people. People are dying. There was no determination of race."

Clinton honors US bombing dead

By LAURA MYERS

ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE, Md. (AP) — In a somber scene, the bodies of 10 Americans killed in last week's US embassy bombings in Africa returned home yesterday.

Tears streaming down his face, President Bill Clinton watched the flag-draped caskets arrive, one by one.

As a military band played "Nearer My God To Thee," the names of the dead were solemnly announced.

An Air Force plane flew 10 of the 12 American bodies home from Germany, landing at Andrews, just outside Washington, as Clinton and his wife, Hillary Rodham Clinton, met privately with families of those killed and wounded in the bombings.

Military honor guards carried the caskets out the rear of a hulking, gray C-17 transport into a hangar where Clinton and senior members of his administration stood in silence.

The body of an 11th victim, Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Sherry Lynn Olds, 40, was flown to Florida on Wednesday at her family's request.

Another American, Jean Dalizu, 60, who was married to a Kenyan, will be buried in Kenya.

Among the mourning family members escorted into an aircraft hangar to meet with the Clintons was a woman leaning heavily on her military escort.

The president's meeting with about 100 family members was private.

Inside the high-ceilinged hangar, 10 black hearses were lined up to take the coffins to a military transport for the journey to Dover Air Force Base, Del., where autopsies will be performed before the



US sailors and Marines carry the flag-draped coffins of 10 Americans from a US Air Force transport plane at Andrews Air Force Base, near Washington DC yesterday. (AP)

remains are returned to the families.

The State Department, meanwhile, disclosed Wednesday that the US ambassador in Nairobi, Prudence Bushnell, had expressed concern last December that the Kenyan embassy wasn't adequately protected against an attack because it was surrounded by busy

streets. She wanted a new embassy in a more isolated location in line with the strictest State Department guidelines.

Undersecretary of State Thomas Pickering said today that Bushnell had asked for several other changes at the same time.

"We were able to take care, in effect, of the other issues. The

location question, as you know, was a question of how much money we had to spend on all our embassies worldwide and whether Nairobi in particular met the priority.

"Unfortunately, of course, it didn't, because we didn't have unlimited funds to work with, and so we were unable to be responsive

there," Pickering said on ABC's *Good Morning America*.

Albright on Wednesday was in Germany to visit nine Americans who were wounded in the blasts, in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Nairobi. Besides the 12 Americans and more than 250 Africans killed, 5,000 people were wounded, mostly in the Kenyan capital.

Iraqi paper slams UN inspectors

By MARIAM SAMI

BAGHDAD (AP) — An envoy carried a message from UN chief Kofi Annan to the Iraqi leadership yesterday amid new charges from Baghdad the nation is not being treated fairly by weapons inspectors.

UN envoy Prakash Shah, who came to Iraq for talks aimed at defusing the latest crisis over weaponry, said his message would be delivered later today to Iraq's deputy prime minister, Tariq Aziz.

Shah did not disclose the letter's contents.

But UN spokesman Fred Eckhard said earlier this week that Annan would ask Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein to reverse Iraq's decision not to cooperate with UN inspectors.

Saddam announced last week that Iraq would no longer cooperate with the UN Special Commission, which is charged with ensuring that Iraq eliminates its biological and chemical weapons and long-range missiles.

The chief UN weapons inspector, Richard Butler, said in a letter to the UN Security Council on Wednesday that Iraqi restrictions

were making it impossible for inspectors to ensure that Iraq was not reviving its weapons programs.

But the state-run *Al-Kadisiya* newspaper today repeated Iraq's allegation that Butler was working on behalf of the US to prolong the sanctions.

In Paris, meanwhile, the French Foreign Ministry said yesterday a letter was handed to Aziz expressing "concern about Baghdad's refusal to cooperate."

The letter, from Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine called it "a grave decision that my country can't help but deplore."

India government wins respite, but still on edge

MADRAS, India (Reuters) — India's minority government won a respite yesterday as a key coalition partner put off a decision on whether to withdraw support over a river-waters dispute.

But a sword still hung over the government's head as Jayaram Jayalalitha, leader of the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) party, was authorized by colleagues and allies to make their next move.

Leaders of the Tamil Nadu state-

based party and its partners, who control 27 seats in the 545-member lower house of parliament, closed ranks to back the across-the-board politician.

They gave her a free hand after a meeting at her Madras home.

"We have unanimously authorized the supreme leader of the AIADMK front to take an appropriate decision and announce it at the appropriate time," Vazhapadi Ramamurthy, petroleum minister and leader of the Tamilnaga Rajiv

Congress, told reporters.

The Tamil Nadu groups had threatened to pull out of the coalition led by Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) over an interstate dispute linked to the distribution of waters from the Cauvery River.

Political commentators said the impact of the latest crisis to hit Vajpayee's government in its fifth month in power depended on the stance of the main opposition

party, the Congress.

Asked if the Congress was ready to step in to form a government, party president Sonia Gandhi told the Star News channel: "The question does not arise yet because nothing has happened yet."

In response to the same question, the party's lower house leader, Sharad Pawar, said: "Why hurry?" Speculation has mounted that Jayalalitha could be waiting to strike a pact with Congress before quitting the BJP alliance.



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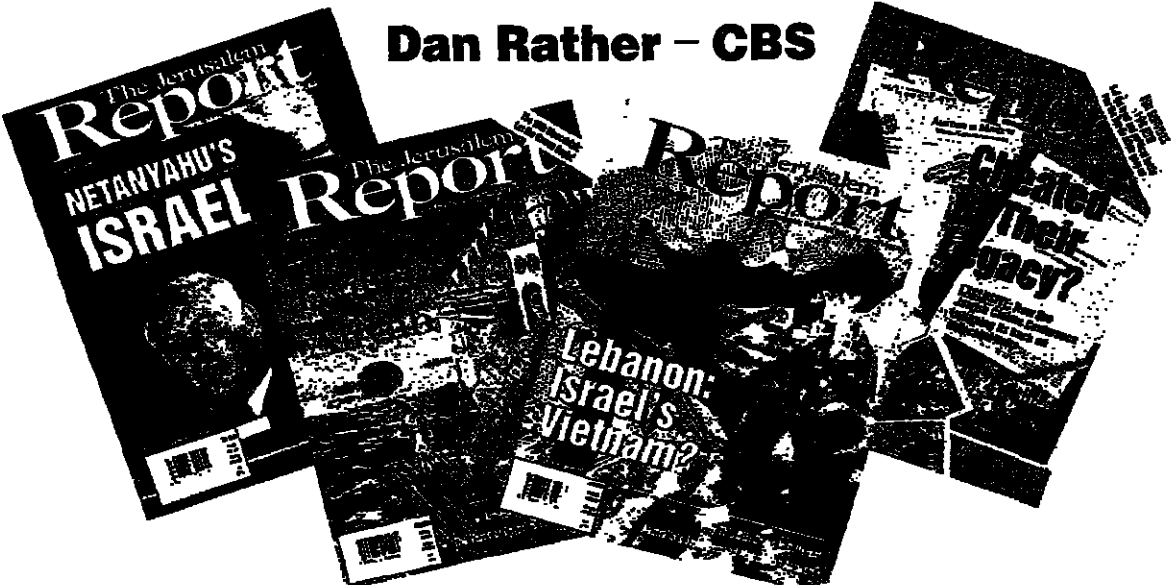
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Needed: A new budget recipe

Labor and Social Affairs Minister Eli Yishai stormed out of Wednesday's cabinet meeting on the budget, saying it "does nothing" for the unemployed and calling the whole process "a farce."

If the budget is a farce, its star is Yishai himself, who, along with other ministers resisting reform and advocating fiscal expansion, are the primary obstacles to a budget that creates jobs through economic growth.

At this very preliminary stage in the budget process, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman deserve credit for resisting numerous calls to increase the budget. The deficit target adopted - two percent of the gross domestic product - keeps the government on a path of restraint that is critical to assuring foreign investors that the economy will turn around.

The cabinet also made the right choice in freezing the minimum wage in real terms, rather than continuing to link it to the average wage (which tends to rise faster than inflation). The commitment is linked to freezing senior civil servants pay in a similar manner, which is also a positive development.

This accomplishment, however, has already been put into question by Netanyahu himself, who is not completely denying reports that he has agreed to a multibillion shekel, multiyear increase in defense spending. The absence of Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai from the budget vote, without leaving instructions to vote against it, is further indication that such a deal is in process.

On its face, the prospect of an increase in defense spending is not disturbing, and may even be warranted. Providing for defense is the government's first obligation, as only the government can do it, and it is the only budget item upon which the nation's existence and prospects for peace depend. Letting military readiness dwindle, or forsaking necessary and expensive modernization efforts, is a dangerous gamble that we cannot afford.

Yet the high stakes surrounding the defense budget argue as compellingly for reform as for increasing spending. A recent IDF-ordered study found that almost half of the defense budget goes to salaries - even though the military draws upon the cheap labor of its thousands of draftees.

It is not acceptable for Mordechai and the IDF

to claim the sky (or ballistic missiles) will fall without a budget increase, while at the same time claiming that salaries must not be touched. If the defense budget crisis is dire enough to warrant national sacrifices - such as jeopardizing the budget framework - then it is dire enough to warrant unpalatable steps to save money within the defense budget. Netanyahu should not agree to any defense budget increase that is not tightly linked to serious internal budgetary reforms.

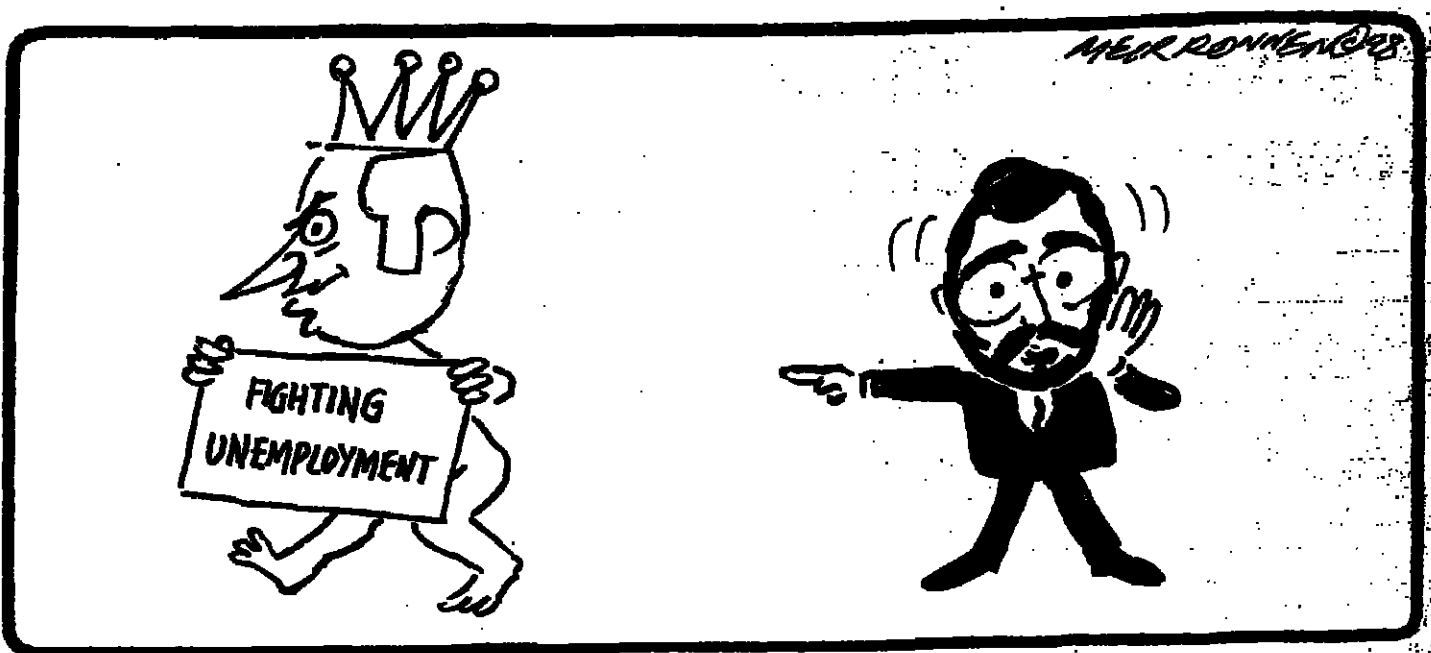
As with the defense budget, the national budget suffers from a yawning gap between how ministers describe the economic situation, and what they are willing to do to rectify it. Though there still may be some ministers who really believe that opening the floodgates of government spending is the solution, most understand that the budget is already too large, taxes are already too high, and that the budget must be restructured to maximize economic growth.

As the minister who is fond of challenging his colleagues to "look into the eyes" of the unemployed, Yishai should be the greatest advocate of slashing government waste, cutting taxes, and cranking up infrastructure spending. Yet everyone knows that the Shas Party, the supposed champion of the unemployed, would defend to the death every shekel of transfer payments, and the bloated budget of the Religious Affairs Ministry.

Perhaps a modest proposal is in order: No minister may accuse the government of callously ignoring unemployment without proposing cuts in his or her own budget. Until there is some evidence of ministers willing to sacrifice their own narrow political and ministerial interests for the good of the economy, all talk of fighting unemployment is indeed a farce.

Though Industry and Trade Minister Nathan Sharansky, as the leader of the band of six ministers who opposed the budget, is in the best position to organize a responsible alternative to the usual irresponsible griping, no single minister can force the necessary budget reform.

Netanyahu may have succeeded in staving off (his words) "an election-year budget." But to really spur growth and lick unemployment, avoiding irresponsibility is not enough. Netanyahu must not be satisfied with preventing the budget from boiling over; he must set about the politically difficult task of changing its recipe.



Objectives unlimited, address unknown

MOSHE ARENS

Only people seized with hate would be prepared to indiscriminately murder men, women and children. And the hate is clearly directed against anything Western.

There is good reason to suspect that these "new-breed" anonymous terrorists got some help from Middle Eastern states

The US, the "Great Satan," heads the list. Israel, the protégé of the Great Satan, follows close behind. The list encompasses all nations viewed by them as Western in culture or orientation; in short, it encompasses all the democratic nations of the world, as well as any country perceived as being allied to them.

Muslim fundamentalism seems to encourage, if not to produce, this kind of hatred among its adherents. Its most ardent followers seem to be prepared to proceed from hate to murder.

It is, therefore, no wonder that the Middle East is the breeding ground for holy warrior terrorist movements engaged in violence throughout the world, and it is a pretty safe bet that the embassy bombings in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam came from one or several countries of the Middle East.

The use of diplomatic pouches to transport equipment and send messages, and of diplomatic passports to cross borders, can make things a great deal easier. It is also a reason why the terrorists prefer not to identify themselves - it might blow their sponsor cover.

But it is no secret that the governments of Iran, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Sudan have at one time or another actively promoted terrorism. On a number of occasions they have been caught red-handed.

The men responsible for blowing up Pan Am aircraft over Lockerbie are currently enjoying a safe haven in Libya. Terrorists working out of the Syrian Embassy in London were caught on the verge of blowing up an El Al flight from London to Tel Aviv. Iranian agents have been caught, tried, and convicted for committing acts of terror in Germany.

The list of terrorist acts likely to have been committed with the assistance, or even under the direction, of one of these states is long. This has been correctly referred to as state terrorism, and it is the most difficult brand of terrorism to combat.

Only an internationally coordinated effort, including severe sanctions against terrorist states, is likely to produce results and prevent further heavy loss of life. If, as has already occurred - a country tries to make a "deal" with terrorists to be taken off their list of targets, it is likely to be of short duration, and makes the fight against terrorism by the rest of the international community that much harder.

And what about Israel, located the center of this vortex of terrorist activity?

There are those that claim that if Israel will only be sufficiently forthcoming in the negotiations with the Palestinian Authority, terrorism aimed at it would stop. There are many good reasons to try to achieve an agreement with the Palestinians, but it is an illusion to believe that such an agreement would end the acts of terror.

As noted, these people have unlimited objectives. As far as they're concerned, nothing short of the destruction of Israel will do.

Saving the world

GERALD M. STEINBERG

Even for stereotypically cynical Israeli journalists and pundits, the images of IDF soldiers and sniffer dogs searching through the rubble left by the terror blasts in Nairobi were sources of national pride. The contrast between the blind hatred that motivates terrorists to murder and maim, and the effort by the Israelis - who have often been terror's victims - to locate and save the survivors, was too blatant to ignore.

For a few short days, the suicide attacks against the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, and the Israeli response, stripped away the propaganda and distortion of Middle East politics. The distinction between terrorists and their victims has been brought into sharp focus.

Doing the right thing has also been a source of national unity, and the dispatch of the Israeli search-and-rescue team received support across the political spectrum. This operation created, however temporarily, a renewed sense of national purpose and a boost to morale. Once again, the army became a unifying symbol, acting in the name of all of Israel and Jewish people. This was a mission that all Israelis and Jews could support - religious and secular, as well as Right and Left. (The only exception appeared in a critical article in a Israeli newspaper, whose editors seem to have forgotten the teaching that "he who saves a single life is as if he has saved an entire world.")

In the past week, the Jewish state has saved the world many

times over. Israel acted according to its ancient mandate, to be a light unto the nations, and according to the principles which emphasize the sanctity of life established for the IDF.

The Israeli rescue team was equipped with advanced technology, trained and ready because it has had to respond to similar

predictably put ideology ahead of saving lives and rejected Israeli assistance following a major earthquake earlier this year. This time, the victims of the hate-filled crime were Africans (primarily Kenyans) and American officials.

AS flags are lowered and the funerals are held, the bonds

For ordinary Americans who saw the Israelis going through the charred wreckage to locate the bodies, the alliance between Washington and Jerusalem has become visible and tangible

attacks against Israeli and Jewish targets around the world.

In the past few years, two massive car bombings, similar in many ways to the last week's terror attacks in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, destroyed the Israeli Embassy and the Jewish community headquarters in Buenos Aires. (No one has yet been charged with the murderous attack, but there is evidence linking Islamic and Iranian-sponsored groups.)

Israeli civil defense groups are always on alert to respond to possible attacks in Israel itself. At the same time, they are available to assist abroad, and have also been sent to help locate and save victims following earthquakes in Turkey and other countries. (Afghanistan's Islamic war-lords

between the US and Israel, the two primary targets of international and Islamic terror, are strengthened. For ordinary Americans who saw the Israelis going through the charred wreckage to locate the bodies, the alliance between Washington and Jerusalem has become visible and tangible - in Israel, the Americans do, in fact, have a valuable ally.

As long as these images remain, the pressure on Israel to take security risks in the wake of continued Palestinian terror, and the off-the-record and anonymous quotes from State Department and White House officials that are critical of the Israeli government, will be tempered.

The Israeli rescue operation also helped to recall and perhaps

restore the close relations with the Black African states that were established in the 1960s. These were severed a few years later, when the Arab states pressured and bribed the Africans to end all contacts with Israel and join the anti-Israel block in the United Nations.

Slowly, in the past few years, some of the ties and trust have been reestablished. Now, the rapid Israeli aid, concentrated on rescuing the Kenyan victims as well as the Americans, should speed this process. After the Africans saw the Israelis arrive a few hours after the blasts "like angels from the sky," as a Kenyan Red Cross official noted, the pace of reconciliation might increase.

Soon, no doubt, we will be brought back to what passes for normalcy. The Arab states, who have largely remained silent in response to the Islamic terror, and are leading the charge to rehabilitate Saddam Hussein, will demand a UN meeting to condemn Israel again for some perceived infraction.

The assistance provided by Israel to the victims of terror will be forgotten. And in Israel, the political divides will take over the headlines, talk shows, and columns again.

Nevertheless, this small and short operation helped to show us that the core Jewish and Israeli values are still alive, even after the generations of responses to war and terrorism. For all of our faults and self-criticism, we are still capable of being a light to ourselves and to the nations.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WHAT IS MEIMAD?

Sir, - Your August 11 issue reflected the manifold activities of Meimad, but unfortunately in three different ways, which could easily cause confusion.

The picture from the day camp in Kiryat Malachi was described as sponsored by "the Meimad organization." On the same page Amy Klein described a representative of the "dovish, religious, Meimad party" as joining the race for the Jerusalem city council. On the facing page you mentioned a meeting which includes representatives from the "moderate religious Meimad movement."

Yes, we are indeed a moderate political movement (not yet a party). We are deeply troubled by the polarization of Israeli society, the challenges to the Jewish content of the state and the identification of Religious Zionism with political and religious extremism.

IN DEFENSE OF ORR

Sir, - Your editorial "Ori Orr should resign" (July 30) is unfair and unwise. That he slipped is indisputable. The he apologized is also clear. However, your condemnation is unfair. When passing judgment on a personality such as Orr one must take into consideration the total achievements and contributions to our country that Orr has made.

You cannot disregard the over 30 years of military leadership and

Meimad members include rabbis and other educators who believe that the wellbeing of the Jewish people and of the State of Israel take precedence over control of the entire area of the Land of Israel. We support the peace process but don't see ourselves as a dovish party any more than Shas or the Third Way.

We are perceived as being dovish only because the NRP has become the party of the extreme Right. We wish to prevent a *kulturkampf* by fostering dialogue and tolerance and by real cooperation between different parts of Israeli society.

We are convinced that only a position that reflects moderation can express the will of Israel's silent majority and bridge the gaps that endanger our future.

MONI MORDECHAI
Meimad spokesman
Jerusalem.

service to our country. On balance, Orr's record is definitely more positive and thus forgiveness for slippage is in order. His departure under these circumstances will hurt the interests of the State of Israel. You don't cut off our nose to spite your face.

DAVID SEGAL

Ramat Hasharon.

CROSSES AT AUSCHWITZ

Sir, - I don't understand why people object to the display of crosses at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Let there be plenty of crosses. May they serve as a reminder to us, and to them, that the perpetra-

tors of the dreadful inhuman deeds of the Shoah called themselves Christians.

CARL ALPERT

Haifa.

LEGAL ACTIVITY

Sir, - The American State Department and other "friends" have spread throughout the world the notion that Jewish settlement in Judea and Samaria is a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention - and as such the settlements are an obstacle to peace.

However, paragraph 2 clearly states that the convention, outlawing settlement on occupied land, shall apply to cases of partial or total occupation of the territory of a "High Contracting Party" - in other words the territory of a sovereign state. Under these circumstances, it clearly does not apply to Judea and Samaria.

As a result of a war imposed upon it by rapacious neighbors Israel seized these lands in an act of self-defense. At that time, Judea and Samaria were not sovereign territories of any state. Jordan's tenancy in these territories stemmed from its 1948 annexation, which was completely illegal.

The Jordanian occupation of the so-called West Bank was only recognized by its patron Britain, and by Pakistan. The international community and even the Arab world rejected the idea that Jordan had any sovereign rights to this land. Judea and Samaria cannot be regarded as occupied land.

Why, one wonders, do Israeli representatives not make this clear?

ITTA HOROL

Tel Aviv.

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

65 years ago: On August 14, 1933, *The Palestine Post* continued to complain about the dangerous Jaffa port congestion and demanded that the Customs should take over new large stores to house goods, increase the port

personnel and construct new quays and moorings.

25 years ago: On August 14, 1973, *The Jerusalem Post* reported that two Israeli patrol boats were attacked in the Gulf of Suez.

Two Israeli soldiers were hurt but both ships returned safely to base. In an exchange of fire one Egyptian "Castro" patrol boat was hit, but not sunk.

Alexander Zvielli

POSTSCRIPTS

CHARGING \$185 for satin shorts may seem a little steep, especially when they aren't much bigger than a postage stamp.

But nothing's too good for Barbie.

The National Barbie Doll Convention held in Atlanta was described as "the greatest accumulation of Barbie collectibles in the world," by Dan Miller, publisher of *Miller's Fashion Doll* magazine.

Mary Kay Mouton, who sold those shorts, got into the Barbie craze as a child. She painstakingly saved all her Barbie doll paraphernalia, only to see her mother give it all away. Mouton estimates the collection is now worth more than \$10,000. But she recouped some

of her losses with a quilt she made that featured her original Barbie surrounded by smaller dolls. It won a prize at a national quilting show, which led to an offer by Mattel to buy the creation for \$9,000.

Doll prices at the convention ranged from spare-change cheap to check-bouncing expensive. An unopened McDonald's Happy Meal Barbie fetched \$2, while an original Barbie in her striped black and white swimsuit cost \$14,000.

Biker Barbie came clad in leather and chains. Another doll was dressed as Jane Fonda as she appeared in the science fiction film *Barbarella*. And countless others sported satin, velvet, chiffon, tulle, feathers, jangling

sequins and Swarovski crystals. The convention also featured workshops on topics such as how to retool a Barbie that has been loved bald.

WE'D LOVE to know what this guy was thinking while he walked around as a human condom.

Julien, a 20-year-old American, spent five days parading around the 12th World AIDS Conference in Geneva. Around him, posters greeting delegates urged men to protect their jewels. The halls abounded with free condoms - 30,000 of them.

While the latex sheaths embarrassed some and angered others, most of the 13,000 conference participants welcomed them as

key weapon in the global battle to prevent the spread of AIDS.

Julien wore dark sunglasses and a head-to-toe green-yellow fabric sheath, with slits for eyes and the title Mr. Lover Man emblazoned near the waist. He was one of several contraceptives cruising the conference halls.

At one booth, condoms exploded with a bang every few minutes. Condom maker Durex was showing just how strong their products are, by filling them with air until they burst. The company also organized the walking condoms.

Melvin Mortensen, a Dane, was very much in fashion, attired in a white latex dress, pink sash, long false eyelashes and a hat covered in white inflated condoms.

Vignettes from the Jewish wasteland

JONATHAN ROSENBLUM

A leading figure in the *ba'al teshuva* movement was once giving a lecture in the US. At the end of the lecture, a woman rose to express her concerns about modern family life.

She proceeded to describe a new group formed in America to strengthen the family and listed some of its proposals.

The first was that families should spend a day together every week free of all outside intrusions - no TV, no telephones.

The other idea was one for strengthening the marital bond between husbands and wives. To maintain the passion and newness in marriage, the group advocated alternating periods of sexual separation and coming together.

studiously avoided, as if the purpose of the whole affair was to distract the widow from her loss. The pity here is not the failure to observe religious rituals. It is the substitution of something ersatz for customs perfectly suited to the emotional needs of those in grief.

Rather than trying to forget or hide their grief, Jewish mourners proclaim it: by the low uncomfortable stools on which they sit, by their unkempt appearance, and by their torn garments.

No one addresses the mourner until he or she addresses them - a rule that protects those who have come to comfort them from uttering all manner of stupidities and spares the mourner from having to listen to them. It is the mourners' needs that govern; they are

The tragedy of Jewish illiteracy is not the absence of some arcane body of knowledge, but the souls cut off from their own richest resources

When she had concluded, the woman turned to the rabbi and asked plaintively, "Now, Rabbi, why couldn't Judaism have something like that?"

TWENTY YEARS ago, a recent college graduate found himself seated on a transcontinental flight next to an older gentile. Towards the end of the flight, the discussion turned towards religion, with the non-Jew asking the young man about Judaism.

The young man replied that he was very happy to be Jewish because Judaism teaches that "you can believe whatever you want and do whatever you want."

Of Judaism's positive beliefs, this Yale Phi Beta Kappa could have named only one: denial of Jesus as the messiah. And he would have been shocked to hear Judaism described as a religion of Law.

As the flight ended, the older man, who, unlike my friend, had actually read the Hebrew Bible, told him, "I'm afraid you don't know anything about your religion."

But for that non-Jew's parting comment, my friend might never have had his curiosity pricked enough to find out what Jews actually believe and do.

FOR THOSE not raised in religious homes, visits back to America after many years are the equivalent of the final dinner party in Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*. One is suddenly forced to confront how much one has changed over the years.

In the course of one such visit, my wife made a condolence call to an acquaintance whose husband had died. The traditional seven days of *shivah* had been replaced by three days of "visitation" - two hours for two nights and a third day at the club.

Like most American Jews, the unfortunate widow had no familiarity with traditional Jewish mourning nor anyone to guide her. The visitation resembled a cross between a cocktail party and an Irish wake more than a Jewish house of mourning.

The bereaved widow felt compelled to act as a hostess, greeting her "guests" as they arrived and directing them to the buffet laden with food and drink. All mention of the deceased was

not expected to entertain. The focus of the conversation is the deceased. The mourner speaks as much or as little as he wishes and others share their memories. At the end of the *shivah*, a mourner does not find him or herself suddenly alone without having had the chance to give vent to his or her loss.

SUCH VIGNETTES of Jewish ignorance could be multiplied endlessly, for such ignorance characterizes today's Jewish life: ignorance of the most fundamental Jewish practices, like Shabbat or the rules of family life; ignorance of basic Jewish beliefs - for instance, the centrality of the afterlife in Jewish thought; and ignorance of the rhythms of Jewish life, of any exposure to how Jews celebrate and mourn.

As Reform leader Eric Yoffie candidly admits, "Ours is a uniquely ignorant generation, a generation uniquely without precedent in all of Jewish history." Not just ignorant, but dead to "any vision of the sacred."

Modern Jews cannot explain why they don't observe Shabbat, for instance, because for so long they have been denied the tools to see why anyone would.

The education provided in Sunday and Hebrew schools frequently does more harm than good. Students in these schools are like students of astronomy exposed only to the Ptolemaic theory of the heavenly spheres. The illusion of knowledge prevents them from discovering Copernicus.

From the little gleaned in Sunday school all that remains is the certainty that nothing in Judaism speaks to the deepest needs of the soul. So when young Jews search for meaning and purpose in their lives, the one place they don't even bother to look is their own religion.

Never having opened a Talmud, or studied a Rashi, or even talked to a Jew for whom the Torah is the living word of God, tens of thousands turn to Zen Buddhism, Christianity, TM, Hare Krishna or other cults.

The tragedy of Jewish illiteracy is not the absence of some arcane body of knowledge, but the souls cut off from their own richest resources. For even today, Jews respond powerfully when exposed for the first time to the "something like that" of Judaism.



National afflictions

MICHAEL MARMUR

THIS just in from our medical staff: A potentially lethal virus, known to attack all peoples but particularly Jews, is sweeping across the country. As a service to readers of this newspaper, and in the interests of public health, here is a brief guide to three variants of the scourge.

• **Uninformed Aggression:** Known to some by its official Latin name, *ignoramus pompissimus*, this affliction attacks the brain in a terrible way. Common symptoms include the tendency to display apparent expertise on subjects far from the patient's world of experience. Indeed, there seems to be an inverse proportion between the volume of knowledge possessed on a certain issue, and the volume with which one speaks when addressing that topic.

Jews of all stripes and commitments seem prone to the ravages of this condition. Hence, for example, many non-Orthodox Jews display evidence of this infection when expressing opinions about the traditionally observant. They either portray their counterparts as villainous scoundrels, rooted inexorably in the Dark Ages, or alternatively see anyone with a beard and fringes as paragons of piety and virtue.

Orthodox Jews from various camps, too, are susceptible to the bug. Knowing little and caring less about the philosophical underpinnings of liberal Judaism, some are keen to project enormous rage and rivers of bile onto the Other.

Unencumbered by information or perspective or even a fundamental empathy for their brothers and sisters, sufferers from this syndrome prefer diatribe to dialogue. If a Reform Jew has the temerity to protest, such a person is immediately branded a hysterical troublemaker.

Apparently bullies prefer their victims to be polite. • **Selective Memory:** Research and common sense both tell us that all memory is selective. To remember involves not only an involuntary response, but also an ethical commitment. And yet some catastrophe, perhaps the leakage of concentrated intolerance into the water supply, has led to a widespread assault on the brain cells of countless citizens.

How to recognize the tell-tale signs of what experts call *amnesia eccentrica*?

To illustrate, let us consider the case history of J. This apparently normal individual can be overheard listing the scandalous exploits of various villains and miscreants, but he displays a total incapacity to recall one act of corruption, sexual indiscretion, outrageous tastelessness, character assassination or even straight old-fashioned assassination committed by anyone from his own community.

Opinions vary as to the pathology of this particular condition. It appears that the average mind is so overwhelmed with delight to see ideological foes behaving abominably, that all residual data concerning shabby conduct in one's own camp is deleted from the memory banks.

Some are stricken so badly that their elementary knowledge of Jewish history is affected. A recent example might be taken from a polemical article in this very newspaper, in which one strident social commentator lambastes the Reform Movement for calling for the abolition of the fast of Tisha Be'av.

Here Selective Memory Syndrome hit twice: First the expert seems to ignore the thousands of Reform Jews in Israel and around the world who grapple seriously with the significance of the day.

Secondly, and more surprisingly, he seems to have forgotten the fact that the earliest recorded suggestion in favor of abolishing Tisha Be'av is attributed to Rabbi Judah the Prince, the redactor of the Mishna. Rabbi Judah is rarely identified as a self-hating Reform fiend, but when the epidemic hits, anything is possible.

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signs of what experts call *amnesia eccentrica*?

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Opinions vary as to the pathology of this particular condition. It appears that the average mind is so overwhelmed with delight to see ideological foes behaving abominably, that all residual data concerning shabby conduct in one's own camp is deleted from the memory banks.

Some are stricken so badly that their elementary knowledge of Jewish history is affected. A recent example might be taken from a polemical article in this very newspaper, in which one strident social commentator lambastes the Reform Movement for calling for the abolition of the fast of Tisha Be'av.

Orthodox Jews from various camps, too, are susceptible to the bug. Knowing little and caring less about the philosophical underpinnings of liberal Judaism, some are keen to project enormous rage and rivers of bile onto the Other.

Unencumbered by information or perspective or even a fundamental empathy for their brothers and sisters, sufferers from this syndrome prefer diatribe to dialogue. If a Reform Jew has the temerity to protest, such a person is immediately branded a hysterical troublemaker.

Apparently bullies prefer their victims to be polite. • **Selective Memory:** Research and common sense both tell us that all memory is selective. To remember involves not only an involuntary response, but also an ethical commitment. And yet some catastrophe, perhaps the leakage of concentrated intolerance into the water supply, has led to a widespread assault on the brain cells of countless citizens.

How to recognize the tell-tale signs of what experts call *amnesia eccentrica*?

To illustrate, let us consider the case history of J. This apparently normal individual can be overheard listing the scandalous exploits of various villains and miscreants, but he displays a total incapacity to recall one act of corruption, sexual indiscretion, outrageous tastelessness, character assassination or even straight old-fashioned assassination committed by anyone from his own community.

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Here Selective Memory Syndrome hit twice: First the expert seems to ignore the thousands of Reform Jews in Israel and around the world who grapple seriously with the significance of the day.

Secondly, and more surprisingly, he seems to have forgotten the fact that the earliest recorded suggestion in favor of abolishing Tisha Be'av is attributed to Rabbi Judah the Prince, the redactor of the Mishna. Rabbi Judah is rarely identified as a self-hating Reform fiend, but when the epidemic hits, anything is possible.

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Some are stricken so badly that their elementary knowledge of Jewish history is affected. A recent example might be taken from a polemical article in this very newspaper, in which one strident social commentator lambastes the Reform Movement for calling for the abolition of the fast of Tisha Be'av.

• **One-Eyed Vision:** Invented by the Cyclops, made famous in Israel's founding years by Moshe Dayan, *monoscopia absurda* is now prevalent amongst apparently two-eyed persons. Indeed, compared to contemporary sufferers, genuinely one-eyed people have little to worry about.

For a classic example, look at the tendency amongst many to say "Judaism" when they mean Halacha, Jewish law. It is almost as if the entire category of Aggadah has been excised from the collective consciousness, or relegated to the status of folksy wisdom.

In the land of the bifocally challenged, Judaism is understood as an unbroken chain of tradition. Nothing ever changes in this world view; innovation is a dirty word. Little wonder that this approach leaves an alienated majority on the outside, and a vociferous minority circling the wagons.

But does this version of Jewish faith and culture deserve such widespread approval?

Attempts have been made to understand Judaism in an opposite way, highlighting only its revolutionary aspects. My own diagnosis is that both positions lack depth of vision. Clearly, it is the interplay between tradition and change which has given Judaism its extraordinary potency. But more and more Jews from across the spectrum suffer from a lazy eye: We see one side of the picture, and pretend that the other side does not exist.

Look out for Uninformed Aggression, Selective Memory, and One-Eyed Vision wherever they appear. None of us is immune, although some of us believe we are.

It may seem to you that the warning in the early part of this article is overplayed; after all, surely the disease cannot be life-threatening. In fact, individuals can live for decades while displaying these symptoms, and many manage to live fulfilling lives despite crippling prejudices and debilitating self-imposition.

They, as individuals, can live with these afflictions.

The question for us as a society is, of course: can we?

The writer, a rabbi, is the dean of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Jerusalem.

Middle Israel

AMOTZ ASA-EL

Shwartz is beautiful

When we first arrived in the Big Apple on a steaming August day three decades ago, we had plenty of learning and digesting ahead of us, from subway tokens and classroom lockers to OU labels and Shea Stadium home runs.

Yet we caught up relatively quickly with those and other facets of life in famously vibrant Gotham. What my very Israeli siblings and I failed to comprehend was that anti-Gentile hostility we'd occasionally encounter on the part of local Jews.

If they don't feel at home among Gentiles, why do they voluntarily dwell in their midst, we'd wonder between writing letters home and sifting through the latest *Ha'arets* issue. Why, we wondered, did so few of the Jews we met - none, actually - work in a factory, drop out of school, or go to Vietnam, while so many referred between them to blacks as *shwartzes*.

I don't recall how we sorted out those questions back then, but the *shwartz* label remained etched in my mind as a symbol of that sad mixture of fear, scorn, and prejudice so many people feel toward members of other faiths and tribes.

Fortunately for me, when I returned to New York years later as a university student, I suddenly met more blacks than I had in my entire lifetime. With many of them - like Dan Sibongo, my Zambian magazine-project partner, or Thandeka Gqubule of Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, who used to annoy me with comparisons between Zionists and Afrikaners - I became friends.

Ultimately, distinguishing between Jew and Gentile became to me absurd because it didn't match my experiences: some of my most reliable friends were non-Jews, while some of the worst scum, jerks, and crooks I ran into belonged to my very own kith and kin, God's ostensibly chosen people.

EVIDENTLY, that hasn't been the experience of the haredi journalists who this week trumpeted the shocking revelation that the IDF's rescue operation in Nairobi involved Shabbat desecration. "Just so Israel could prove that it is capable of organizing an aid mission for Kenyans," not to say *shwartzes*.

Sadly, this incident sheds new light on an increasingly aloof haredi community's detachment from its domestic predicaments, our global trends, and even Judaism's halachic imperatives.

First, there was the cause itself. One couldn't help but suspect that behind the undertone in the major haredi organ's critique of Israel's rescue operation lurked an assumption that saving non-Jewish lives is not as worth-while a cause as saving Jewish ones.

To be fair, that sort of sacred-egoism attitude is by no means exclusive to some of us: it has long been the lot of self-appointed saints from a host of faiths, not the least of which are the suspected culprits behind last week's carnage in East Africa.

Surely, Judaism's view, as voiced later this week by Chief Rabbi Yisrael Lau, is that saving a *goy* is no less imperative than saving a Jew.

But Rabbi Lau doesn't, unfortunately, speak for haredi Jewry. If anything, his remained a cry in a tragic wilderness dominated by the scathing silence of parochial rabbis who inspire so many innocent haredim. Why hasn't one - one!

of them risen this week and cried that plucking Kenyans from under the rubble thrust upon them by religious zealots is no less a mitzvah than eating matza on Pessah?

No less tellingly, *Hanodia* lamented Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai's phone discussion of the situation with his American peer William Cohen, Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Shaul Mofaz's "ceaselessly receiving updates," and the IDF's holding of a press conference on Shabbat morning.

Naturally, if one thinks Kenyan lives don't deserve to be saved on Shabbat, then the first two of these grievances are valid. But if they do deserve the kind of treatment we'd all hope for under similar circumstances, then things like recruiting manpower, assembling heavy equipment, and organizing an airlift need to be done, and with the very sort of dispatch and resourcefulness which Mordechai, Mofaz, and so many others exhibited last Shabbat.

The press conference, however, does pose a dilemma, since treating the media side of such an operation may exceed the dry definition of *pikuah nefesh*.

However, as *Hanodia*'s "military correspondent" might have noticed, the IDF's attitude toward the media has changed dramatically in recent years, particularly in adopting OC Air Force Eitan Ben-Eliahu's view, developed during the Gulf War, that due to our cyber-era's information glut, by the next war the media must be treated as an independent arena, just like land, air, sea, and space.

Evidently, that was the thinking behind the operation's well-oiled PR from its onset, and, considering the resounding echo of the IDF's work this week, it's paid off.

Yes, the extent to which this is halachically legitimate needs to be explored. But haredim, who unlike Zionists show little interest throughout the year in solving halachic problems related to running a modern state, have no right to complain when those are treated in halachically questionable ways.

Finally, there is the haredi agenda itself. The rescue operation, as my colleague Calev Ben-David points out in this issue, gave all Israelis reason to be proud. And so, before setting out to challenge the deeds of such Israelis as Lt.-Col. Nahum Frenkel, a 57-year-old businessman who dropped everything and flew off to save Kenyan lives, one must first have a feel for the public's inclinations.

Unfortunately, Israeli haredim, besides often being plagued by severe material shortage, social disenfranchisement, and educational deficiency, have also got an acute PR problem.

If its elite were as savvy as the IDF - who so shrewdly conquered the world's most prestigious screens and front pages - the haredi community would have sent to Nairobi the universally admired Hessed Shel Emer body savers, whose holy work we unfortunately witness after local terrorist attacks.

No, they wouldn't go to create a good impression, but to save lives; that is also why it would pass as a darn good media story, one which would educate more people to shed their anti-haredi prejudices.

Yet tragically, haredi leaders prefer to abandon their PR to the devices of spiteful, narrow-minded ignoramuses. Shame.

The end of the nuclear status quo

MARK HELLER

By agreeing not to veto the creation of a committee of the UN Conference on Disarmament to begin discussions on an international treaty to ban the production of fissile materials, Israel took another step along the road toward the end of the nuclear status quo in the Middle East that has served it so well for so long.

The proposed negotiations follow on an idea, originally raised by George Bush in the early 1990s, to strengthen nuclear non-proliferation by halting the production of enriched uranium and plutonium, ostensibly as an interim step toward the much more ambitious - some would say visionary - goal of universal nuclear disarmament. As such, the "fis-ban" treaty was conceived as a modest effort to freeze the status quo in advance of real counter-proliferation.

But for Israel, one central element of the status quo in this part of the world is its own ambiguous nuclear posture, and this is likely to be challenged by any treaty, to be challenged by any treaty. One reason is that Israel, though

obviously not committed in advance to adhere to any treaty produced by the committee, will find it more difficult not to accept the results of a negotiation it endorsed, and it may be subject to any sanctions stipulated in the treaty if it tries (a consideration already affecting deliberations on ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention).

A second reason is that, while fis-ban negotiations will go on for a very long time and their precise outcome is far from certain, it is difficult to imagine any agreement that will not include some kind of verification procedures involving inspection of facilities. So even if the treaty explicitly covers only future production, inspections may very well expose past activities and have the same political effect as an overt test, confirming what was hitherto only suspected.

This, in turn, would lead to one of two possible outcomes. This first is that Israel would be subjected to irresistible external pressure to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty; given

the experience following the Indian and Pakistani tests, this is the less likely of the two. The second is that other states in the region would be subjected to even greater domestic pressure to withdraw from the NPT - which they are entitled to do on

Israel's current ambiguous nuclear posture is likely to be challenged by any eventual 'fis-ban' treaty

six months' notice - and try to develop their own nuclear capabilities.

Whatever the strategic logic (and most of the candidates already assume an Israeli nuclear capability), the political logic would be similar to that which forced Pakistan to match India's

test, even though Pakistani leaders already assumed an Indian nuclear capability. In either event, Israel's nuclear monopoly would come under much more severe strain.

FOR THESE reasons, Israel had serious misgivings about agreeing to the creation of a fis-ban committee, lest it find itself on some kind of slippery slope that might eventually lead, notwithstanding its formal and informal reservations, to adherence to a fis-ban treaty or even to the NPT. But as the last holdout - India and Pakistan had already withdrawn their opposition - it was not in a position to resist a direct appeal from President Bill Clinton.

Of course, the end of the nuclear status quo is not foreordained, and it will certainly not happen quickly. For one thing, Israel can influence the course of negotiations, especially in coordination with the US, to preserve elements of ambiguity. For example, it may be possible to separate declared from undeclared facilities and preclude

challenge inspections to the latter, or to introduce some effective distinction between past and future production, though such provisions would obviously undermine the effectiveness of any cut-off regime.

Besides, the challenge to Israel's nuclear monopoly does not stem primarily from the implications of a fis-ban treaty, but rather from the long-standing efforts of states like Iraq and Iran, for reasons that are only partially connected with Israel, to acquire their own nuclear capabilities.

Nevertheless, Israel's reluctant consent to the start of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile materials does strengthen longer-term trends that are almost certain, one way or another, to produce a nuclear constellation different from the one that has prevailed in the Middle East for the past few decades. The truly critical question for Israel is not whether this happens sooner or later, but whether it happens before or after peace.

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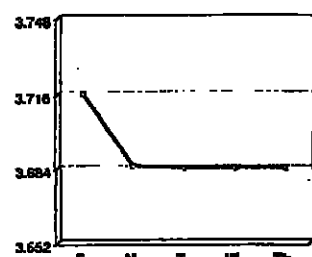
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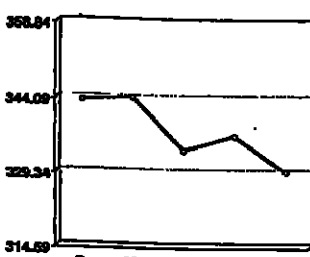
MARKETS

in brief

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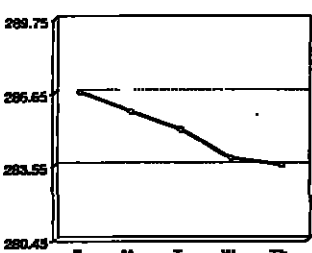


MAOF INDEX



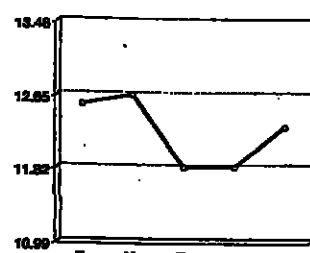
GOLD

\$ per ounce

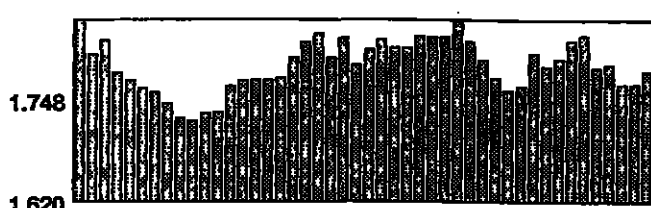


OIL

\$ per barrel of Brent crude

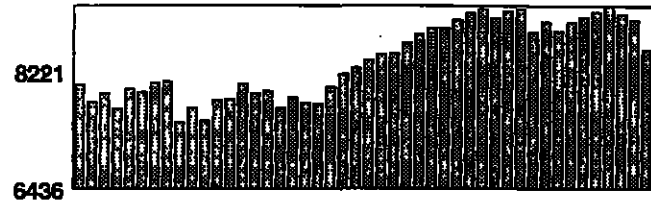


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BIT & BYTES

PA executive: We can supply high-tech workers

Israeli high-tech companies, which are facing a shortfall in skilled manpower, can find workers in the Palestinian Authority-controlled areas, Hassan Kassem, managing director of Arab Turnkey Systems (ATS), a Palestinian computer company, said this week at a conference with Oracle Israel in Ramallah.

Oracle, the world's second-largest software company, announced at the event that it would establish high-tech training centers for Palestinians. The first center is likely to be established in Ramallah and managed by ATS.

"Israeli high-tech companies can find qualified and available workers nearby, in the PA, instead of bringing these workers from faraway places, such as Cyprus and India," Kassem said. Moshe Horav, head of Oracle Israel, agreed with Kassem and called for cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian high-tech companies.

ATS has implemented computerization projects, based on Oracle's technologies, for the PA Finance, Transport and Health ministries and in universities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

MystiCom raises \$2m.

MystiCom, a one-year-old start-up, has raised \$2 million in its second round of financing, led by Eucalyptus VP. All existing investors participated as well.

The company, based in Netanya, is developing designs, known as cores, for communications networking, such as for the Ethernet, for integration into systems on a chip.

In the first round of financing, \$1.5 million was enlisted, led by Newbury Ventures and Polaris Group Venture Capital. Company CEO David Almogor said MystiCom already has signed sales agreements with several companies, mostly in the US, but also in the Far East. The product, mostly aimed for semiconductor companies, is at the last stage of its development and due to be delivered in a few months.

"Semiconductor companies can either license designs or produce them in-house. Chips are becoming very complex. Semiconductor companies can't specialize in all areas," he said.

The funds are to be used for expanding the company's sales office in Palo Alto and to develop its next generation product. Almogor said. He said the company limited investments in the second round, since it is anticipating sales revenue, based on licenses for the use of its designs.

Cisco and BreezeCOM win Romanian contract

Cisco and BreezeCOM have been awarded a contract as part of a strategic partnership with the Romanian Education Ministry. Under the agreement, Cisco, a US maker of data networking products for wide area service markets, will set up the Internet backbone. BreezeCOM, based in the Kiryat Atidim technology park near Tel Aviv, will supply the wireless Internet access products.

Michael Rothenberg, BreezeCOM's CEO, said the company expects that in the short term the contract will be worth \$500,000 and \$2 million.

The contract covers the upgrade of Romania's higher education network RoEduNet, a national networking backbone with major nodes in six cities and links to all the country's universities as well as non-profit scientific and cultural institutions. The ministry may also expand the project throughout the country.

BreezeCOM said this could result in sales worth millions of dollars.

BreezeCOM, established in 1993, is privately held by company executives, private investors and venture capital funds.

EduSoft gets \$3.5 in Latin American orders

EduSoft Ltd. has received orders amounting to \$3.5 million in the second quarter of 1998 from Latin America. The Rosh Ha'ayin-based company is a subsidiary of Degem Systems Ltd., which distributes EduSoft's products exclusively in Latin America. The orders, from customers in Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela, Bolivia, Uruguay and Chile, are mostly for EduSoft's multimedia English-learning products, including the new My First English(C) ESL series for young children.

EduSoft CEO Menachem Hasfari said Latin America was the company's largest market in 1997, constituting 38% of total revenues.

In largest-ever deal involving local high-tech

Platinum buys security software maker Memco for \$500m. in stock

By DAN GERSTENFELD

Platinum Technology of Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois, yesterday announced that it will acquire Tel Aviv-based Memco Software for \$500 million in an exchange of stock, marking the largest ever purchase of an Israeli high-tech firm by a foreign company.

Memco, a leader in security software development and consulting, has over 200 clients including Charles Schwab, GTE, Motorola, MCI, AT&T and Guardian Life. Platinum, which is a provider of software and computer services, said it has signed a definitive agreement to acquire the Israeli firm.

The company said that after finalizing the agreement sometime during the first quarter of next year, Memco will become a wholly owned subsidiary.

Under the terms of the agreement, Platinum will exchange 0.836 shares (\$26)

for each share of Memco, a price which is some 22 percent higher than Wednesday's closing price of Memco's share on the Nasdaq.

"Today Platinum is joining forces with a powerhouse in security to extend its security products, channels, development capabilities and market share," said Andrew Filipowski, president and CEO of Platinum.

"This builds on our current investment, synergies and success with Memco and will further solidify our leadership in the enterprise security arena."

Scott Lenga, Memco's vice president of business development and general counsel, said that there has been a long-standing relationship between the two companies.

"There is a high level of respect for the development in Israel and they are very serious about operations here and continue to build the partnership," Lenga said.

He added that there is talk of efforts to

expand operations in Israel. Memco has some 100 workers in Israel and another 100 in the US.

Memco's main shareholders are Israel Mazin, who is also the chairman and CEO, and Elihu Mashiah, the chief technical officer. Each of the two founders holds approximately 14% of the company.

Mazin said that the company will be more valuable as part of a broader integrated enterprise. The companies said that the combination of Memco's specialized security sales force with Platinum's worldwide coverage will yield a powerful team.

Memco holds currently some \$54m. in cash and 1998 revenues are estimated at \$55m. The company last year signed three deals for over \$1m.

In May the company purchased two companies: AbitNet, an Israeli start-up, and Network Information Technology, in a deal worth \$55m. Following that announcement,

the share lost some 20%, all of which has not yet been recovered.

"Platinum has been distributing our products for over three years," Lenga said. "I guess that they decided that the time was right to try and strengthen the partnership."

He added that the security market is very dynamic right now with a lot of consolidation going on.

"You can either acquire or get acquired," Lenga concluded.

Platinum said that following the transaction it will become one of the largest security software providers in the industry.

Platinum, which had revenues of \$739m. last year, was founded in 1979, and provides software and services that help information technology organizations manage and improve their information technology infrastructure.

Since 1994 the company has acquired 60 software developers and technologies.



Hong Kong plunge continues

A Hong Kong bank's electronic board flashed the Hang Seng index's continuing slide yesterday, reflecting worries over a weakening yen and a selloff of financial heavyweight HSBC Holdings PLC. China's major share market plunged 2.9%. Full market coverage, Page 12.

Jobseekers down 3.4% in July

By DAVID HARRIS

The number of people actively seeking work in July dropped 3.4 percent to a seasonally adjusted 158,600, the Employment Service reported yesterday.

In a statement, the service said the evidence of the last four months suggests "the trend in [rising] unemployment has been stopped."

Despite that fall, there was an increase in the number of towns where joblessness is above 10%, from 14 in June, to 17 last month, the service said.

The areas with the highest unemployment rates in July were Rahat and Kiryat Gat (12.4%), followed by Dimona (11.9%), Eir Maahil Shlomi and Sderot (11.5%). Both Nazareth and Yafia were removed

from the list, as joblessness there fell to 9.5% and 9.4% respectively. At the same time, there was a small increase in the number of legal foreign workers in July, from 79,200 to 79,700.

These figures were published the day after the government agreed to reduce unemployment next year by 30,000.

However, neither Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu nor Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman were prepared to confirm how many people are presently unemployed, with Neeman describing the CBS's official 9.3% jobless rate - 210,000 unemployed - as a "holy myth."

The two met yesterday to decide on the particulars of the 1999 state budget so as to "launch a war against unemployment."

There are no simple ways to reduce unemployment, former finance minister Dan Meridor said, adding that a government-approved 4% inflation target will prevent any real cut in the jobless figures.

Within the cabinet only Yisrael Ba'aliya understands that the attempt to reduce inflation and unemployment at the same time is doomed, said Meridor.

He described the measures approved as "mistaken policy. Throughout the world the experience has been that this type of [tight monetary] policy has brought about increased unemployment."

The usually-critical Manufacturers Association president Dan Proper yesterday praised the government on most of

its decisions but criticized the setting of the 4% inflation target, urging it be raised to at least 5%.

Meanwhile, the Histadrut yesterday repeated its threat to stage a general strike early in September after it failed to reach agreement with the Treasury in talks on public sector pay.

UMB's Brodet steps down

By DAN GERSTENFELD

United Mizrahi Bank board chairman David Brodet yesterday announced his resignation, a mere 10 months after assuming his job.

Brodet, 53, who was appointed last October after serving as treasury director-general under finance ministers Avraham Shohat and Dan Meridor, said he has agreed to continue in the bank for another six months.

Sources familiar with the bank's affairs said that Brodet felt he was not successful in his job.

"It was a chain of events," a source said. "It might be that the job was not suitable for him and he didn't suit the job."

He added that Brodet was considering the move for the last several months.

"It was brewing for a few months and now all the parties involved decided on an amicable manner to end his job," he said.

The source suggested that Brodet, who previously had worked only in the public sector, found it difficult to adjust to the banking world.

Other sources suggested, however, that the resignation might be linked to disagreements with CEO Victor Medina.

"It's very difficult to get along with Medina," one Mizrahi official said. "The previous chairman also left because Medina simply went over his head."

Were you prepared for the current market correction?

COMMSTOCK COMMENTARY

In the first week of August, analysts from three major brokerage firms suddenly became bullish and bearish about the market. But the correction had already taken place - so the advice came too late for many investors.

CommStock didn't wait. On July 28, Tzema Richter, director of our international stocks division, indicated that the U.S. market was ripe for a correction in CommStock Commentary, our free financial report. Investors who took Tzema's advice are now actually benefiting from the market drop.

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Trade deficit with Asia widens

By NINA GILBERT

Israel's trade deficit with Asia, including central Asia and the Far East, has grown to \$21 million this year, compared with a trade surplus of \$800m. in the first seven months of 1997, the Central Bureau of Statistics said yesterday.

At the same time, Israel's trade surplus with the US nearly doubled to \$1.6 billion in the first seven months of the year, while the huge deficit with the European Union shrank by 23%, to \$3.6b. from \$4.7b.

These changes were mostly a result of changes in diamond trade. In the January to July period, diamond exports to Asia fell by 40 percent, as demand for the luxury item plunged due to the economic crisis in the region.

Diamond exports to the US rose by 23% in the period but fell 14% to the EU. Imports of diamonds dropped by 19%, or \$570m.

Sales of the EU, excluding diamonds, grew by 15% to \$410m. in the period, while imports dropped by 4%, or \$300m.

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Team work

They disentangled bodies, sifted through wreckage and extricated survivors — all under the spotlight of the world media. Members of the IDF rescue team tell **Bonnie Rochman** about the heartbreak and exhilaration of Nairobi

When Meital Hallawi finished her training course at the IDF rescue school three months ago, she felt ready for any disaster that might come her way. But she was still caught off guard by the phone call that came as Shabbat approached last Friday, summoning her to her base.

The mission itself was even more of a surprise to the unassuming 19-year-old: She would be going to Kenya on her first international mission, her commander told her, to help save lives at the site of last Friday's explosion at the US embassy in Nairobi.

"I was in total shock," said Hallawi by phone from the scene. "I didn't believe I was going to Kenya until we landed."

Hallawi was forced to acclimate quickly. After a few minutes of team planning, she and 167 other members of a hastily dispatched IDF humanitarian force made up of rescue personnel and medical staff reached the scene of the blast. Chunks of concrete and twisted bars of steel formed a chaotic patchwork. Ufundi House, the five-story building next to the embassy, lay in ruins.

Hallawi's first assignment was to disentangle a body — the first time she had ever seen a corpse — trapped beneath a crumbled wall in the embassy. Then she roved on to Ufundi House, where the number of dismembered bodies in the wreckage numbed her senses. Later there was exhilaration when 48-year-old Sunny Nganga, bloodied and battered, but breathing, was pulled to safety.

During five days of operations, the team steadfastly sifted through dense piles of masonry and shards of twisted metal punctuated by body parts to retrieve 95 victims of the blast. But the indisputable high point was finding three people alive: Nganga, and a woman with her child.

HALLAWI, from Ashdod, said she kept her cool in the face of mass death. "In the raining course, we practiced on jolls all the time," she said.

"Of course seeing a dead person is a shock, but you have to keep going and try to ignore it," she said. "You have to put all your feelings aside and concentrate on pulling the dead people out very slowly and carefully so as not to damage their bodies."

For the members of the IDF Home Front Command rescue team, it was just another day in the line of duty.

The unit has 300 to 400 members, mostly reservists. There are few like Hallawi, doing their regular army service in the unit.

Despite the worldwide recognition it receives for its assistance abroad, the unit is primarily devoted to rescue missions within Israel. It was called in after Scud missiles ravaged Tel Aviv and Ramat Gan in 1991, helped pull people from the Yarkon River last summer after the Maccabiah bridge collapsed and, more recently, its members assisted in evacuating a Beersheba school gymnasium after its roof collapsed on a group of children during basketball practice.

"It's very dangerous. Everything can collapse. When you feel the building move, you realize how dangerous the work is."

— Ilan Cytron, a reservist and law student

practice.

The unit was formed in the late 1960s after the IDF recognized the need to establish a rescue team to deal with catastrophes that result from the collapse of buildings. Today, a system of phone calls and radio announcements informs members of a mission, and within 12 hours the team can assemble and load a plane with equipment for international operations.

Last week was a perfect example: The United States asked late Friday afternoon for Israeli assistance, Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and Chief of General Staff Lt. Gen. Shaul Mofaz approved the request, the first call went out Friday night at 7, and the unit was airborne by 7:30 Saturday morning.

As on all missions, the team arrived equipped with shovels, cables, special listening devices to detect trapped people, blow-

torches and industrial-strength air pillows that can be inflated to elevate heavy objects. They also used specially trained dogs, industrial cranes, pickaxes, drills and their hands to rummage through the wreckage.

All the digging amid unstable piles of masonry can be risky, pointed out Ilan Cytron, 25, a Tel Aviv reservist who returned from Kenya early this week. "It's very dangerous," said Cytron, a law student. "Everything can collapse. When you feel the building move you realize how dangerous the work is."

Late Saturday evening, for example, after the Israelis pulled Nganga from the collapsed Ufundi House, the ruins began to shake. The team continued trying to reach a woman known only as Rose, with whom Nganga had been in contact. But they had to change tactics and switch from crawling around inside the rubble to using a crane to lift off slabs of concrete and debris.

"It was really dangerous to try to rescue her from inside because we didn't want to risk soldiers' lives," he said. The Israeli rescuers finally heaved off the last layer of wreckage and reached Rose at 3 a.m. on Wednesday, but it was too late; her body was cold and still.

Cytron's next orders were to search a high-rise near the embassy. "We really wanted to find somebody alive," he said. And they did. "I found a boy, about 10 years old, and his mother on the 22nd floor. They had stayed up there because they were too scared to come down, even though the stairs were okay. They were so relieved to see us. We gave them water and helped them out."

THE TIME the unit spent in Kenya was labor-intensive: The team slept in Nairobi's Jewish community center in sleeping bags — if they slept at all. "The first night I didn't really sleep," recalled Cytron. "They gave us four or five hours to rest, but I was so keyed up that I couldn't."

"We arrive full of motivation," he said. "That's what makes us so successful."

Israel's high-profile rescue presence as the lead rescue team on the scene had clear international public relations benefits. Photographs of the Israeli soldiers — whom one Kenyan Red Cross worker called "angels from the sky" — with their arms around



survivors adorned newspaper front pages throughout the world this week.

Hallawi's being one of two women on the mission and her fluent English have garnered her even more attention than her comrades.

"I find it very interesting to dig and help out with a situation you usually wouldn't expect a girl to be involved in," she said. "But the [Israeli] men still can't get used to a woman here. They try to help me every time they see me carry a heavy block."

Still, despite this week's media spotlight, soldiers say it is not the fame that attracts them.

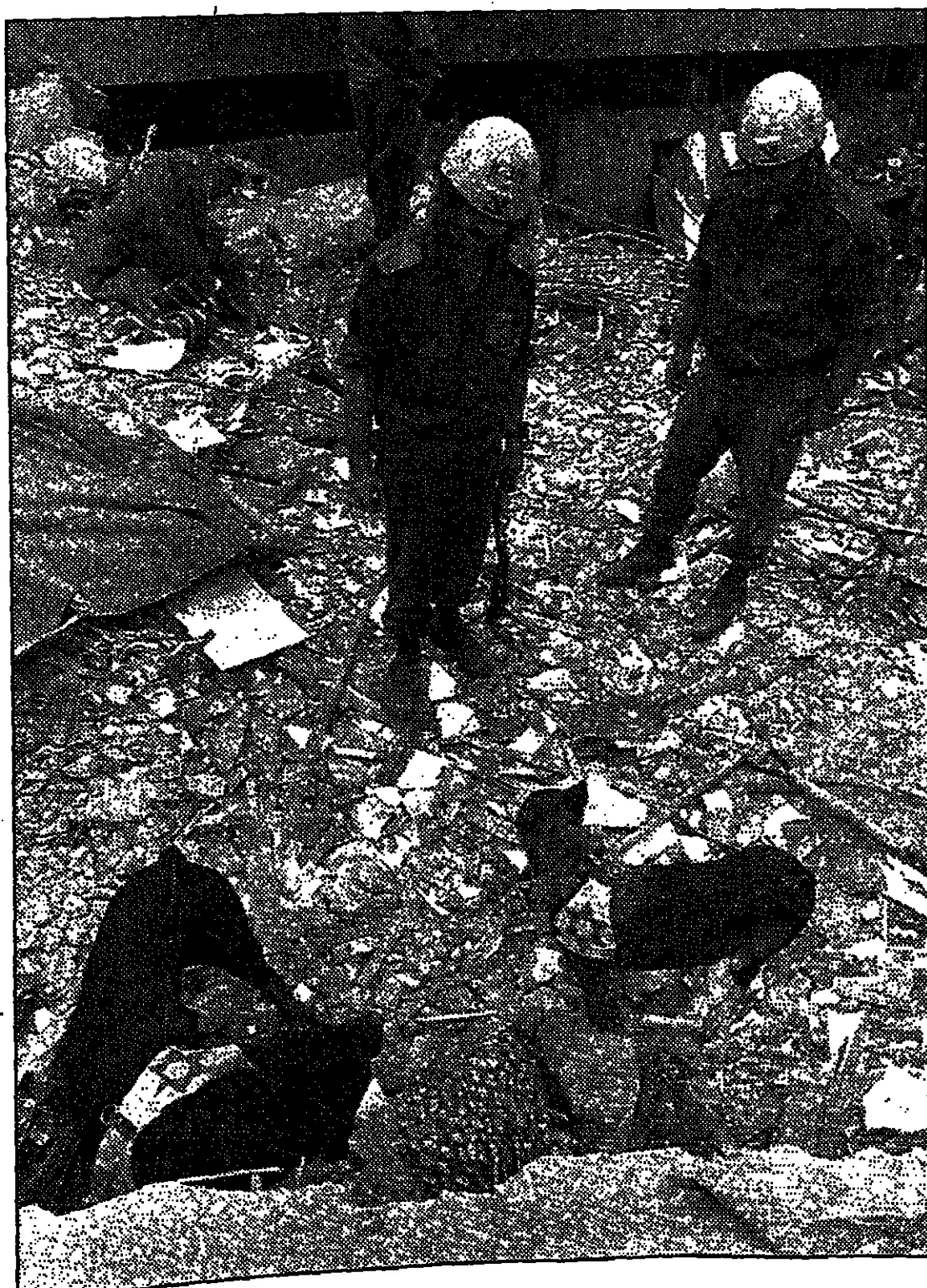
Shaul Nevo, 47, is one of the unit's members who stayed behind this time. The civil engineer participated in a mission to Armenia after a deadly 1988 earthquake, and helped save two people stuck in an eight-story building. In 1992 he was part of the group dispatched to assist in the aftermath of the bombing of the Israeli embassy in Argentina. "There is a feeling when you save a life," said Nevo, who is from Mevasseret Zion. "It's like someone who's born again. There is someone helpless and then you save them. There is nothing more honorable than that."

"In contrast to the role of an army, which is to fight and kill people, we save them," he added. "The feeling is obviously much better."

Ronen Greenberg, 30, was the head of the army's rescue section during the Gulf War, and part of the team that extricated a woman trapped under the remains of her Ramat Gan building. After she was rescued, it was Greenberg who fired the standard questions at her: How do you feel? Was there anyone else with you in your apartment?

A year later at an exhibit by the Home Front Command in Ramat Gan, a woman Greenberg didn't recognize approached him. How do you feel, she asked. Was there anyone else with you in the building?

"I didn't remember her, but she remembered me," said Greenberg. "You save someone from destruction and it leaves a pretty strong impression."



(Clockwise from top): Israeli medics give first-aid to a 13-year-old boy in Nairobi who was found in the wreckage of a seven-story building; The Israeli special rescue team, alongside Kenyan rescuers, carry away Sammy Nganga, whom they found alive after being buried for 36 hours in the collapsed building next to the US embassy; The destruction and ruin caused by Friday's bomb blast; To help find survivors beneath the rubble, the Israeli team arrived in Nairobi accompanied by specially trained search dogs. (Photos: AP)

The high priest of international terror

Douglas Davis explores the psyche of Osama bin Laden – Taliban bankroller and chief Islamic terrorist – a top suspect in the twin bombings of the US embassies last week

When the Taliban conquered Kabul in September 1996, the West was publicly outraged but privately jubilant, hopeful that the Islamic extremists would rid the country of "drugs" and "thugs" – the opium poppy trade and international terrorism.

The expectations were still-born. The drug trade remains a cornerstone of the Afghan economy, while the use of terror – not least against Afghanistan's own civilian population – has become a hallmark of Taliban rule.

Just months after the Taliban took power, the opium trade doubled and Afghanistan became home to the Taliban bankroller and high priest of international terror, Osama bin Laden, prime suspect in the atrocities in Kenya and Tanzania.

No one, of course, can be certain about the identity of the culprit behind last Friday's attacks on the US embassies, which indiscriminately took at least 257 lives in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam.

But the evidence points strongly at Osama bin Laden, the man with the means, the motive and the opportunity to commit the crimes.

He, uniquely, has the political will, the financial means and the logistical infrastructure to mount such massive, complex and simultaneous attacks against American interests in two countries which, with lax security and leaky borders, appear to be among the softest targets in the world.

It is noteworthy that the attacks occurred on the anniversary – eight years to the day – that US troops started arriving in Saudi Arabia following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

Getting US troops out of Saudi Arabia is at the top of Bin Laden's agenda.

No doubt, if Sherlock Holmes were on the case he would already be heading for the high-tech aerie on the dusty plains near Kandahar which serves as the headquarters of the multi-millionaire.

The intrepid Holmes would travel through Pakistan and into Afghanistan, where it would take days of trekking and hill-climbing before he reached a military barracks. He would be told to wait until the call. Then he would set off on an uncomfortable three-hour, cross-country journey into the center of Bin Laden's empire, which is protected by no fewer than 3,000 well-armed, highly trained loyalists.

This is Bin Laden country. Every few kilometers, the detective's heavily escorted vehicle would be halted and questioned before being granted passage.

Once at the base, Holmes might witness the dramatic arrival of Bin Laden in a four-wheel-drive vehicle, greeted by a rain of bullets fired joyfully into the air.

He would then be escorted into a makeshift tent where he would encounter a shy, bearded figure with high cheekbones and narrow eyes.

Dressed in a long brown robe fringed with gold, Bin Laden would likely be seated on a chair, unarmed, but never more than a few paces from his posse of trusted, taciturn guards. These "Afghan Arabs" – Egyptians, Algerians, Lebanese, Kuwaitis,

Turks and Tunisians – were recruited, trained and armed by Bin Laden to fight the Soviet army in Afghanistan during the Eighties.

BIN LADEN'S personal jihad was not fought on the front lines. Instead, using skills and experience acquired in his family's Saudi construction business – and backed by a personal fortune estimated at some \$700 million – Bin Laden worked with Iraqi engineer Mohamed Sa'ad to blast massive tunnels into the Zazi mountains of the Bakhtiar province to build Mujahideen hospitals and arms depots, and cut a trail to within 20 kilometers of the capital, Kabul.

Many of the "Afghan Arabs" survived the war against the Soviets.

Some were recruited for subsequent Islamic-related conflicts – Algeria, Bosnia, Chechnya, Somalia and Tajikistan; others followed their leader to Sudan, where they were employed as instructors at Islamic terrorist training camps or in Bin Laden's commercial road-building and agricultural ventures.

Now, sitting in a makeshift tent in Afghanistan, 40-year-old Bin Laden, the 17th of 52 sons born in Riyadh to a fabulously wealthy Saudi construction magnate, would recall his education in management and economics in King Abdul Aziz University in Jeddah.

He would reflect on his first religious stirrings, in the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, where the family business was rebuilding mosques.

These feelings only intensified with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979: "I was enraged and went there at once," he told a British journalist.

Within months, his newly recruited army was streaming into

Bin Laden issued his third fatwa (religious injunction) in as many years calling on Muslims to kill Americans – any Americans, soldiers or civilians

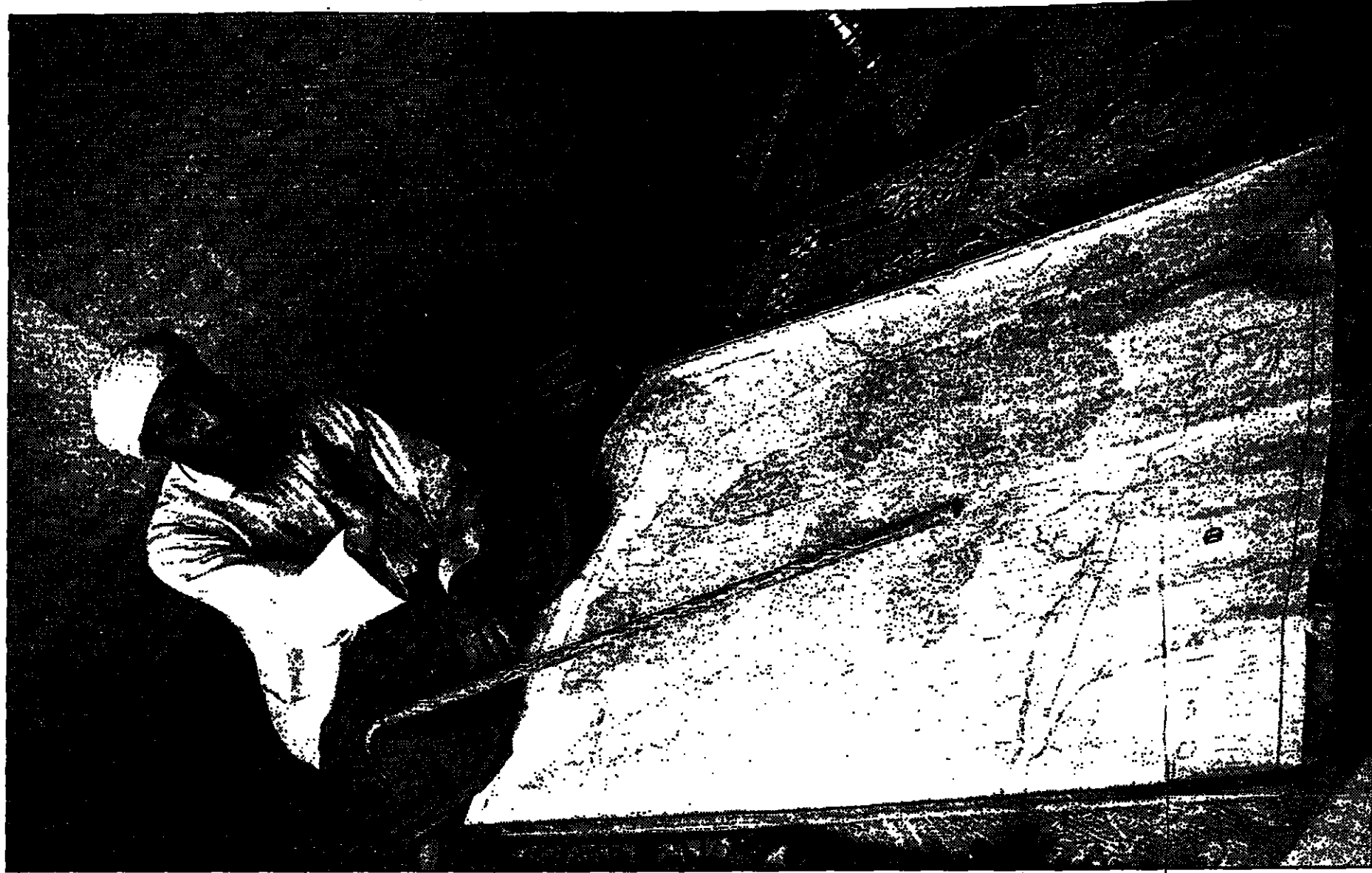
Afghanistan to participate in the jihad.

"No, I was never afraid of death," said Bin Laden. "As Muslims we believe that when we die, we go to heaven."

"Before a battle, God sends us signs, tranquility."

"Once," he recalled, "I was only 30 meters from the Russians and they were trying to capture me. I was under bombardment but I was so peaceful in my heart that I fell asleep."

"I saw a 120-mm mortar shell land in front of me, but it did not blow up. Four more bombs were



Exiled Saudi dissident Osama bin Laden is seen in this April 1998 picture in his fortified hideaway in Afghanistan: "We do not distinguish between those dressed in military uniforms and civilians. They are all targets." (AP)

dropped from a Russian plane on our headquarters but they did not explode. We beat the Soviet Union. The Russians fled."

IRONICALLY, given his antipathy toward the US today, Bin Laden initially found himself on the same side as the Americans in Afghanistan, where both were dedicated to frustrating a common enemy. Bin Laden is reported to have poured \$3 billion of his family's fortune, via the CIA, into the Afghan resistance movement.

But even while Bin Laden was emerging as an Islamic hero, he was growing increasingly dubious about Washington's role in an Islamic jihad.

By the time the Afghanistan war had ended, suspicion had become hate. Radical Islamic ideology had become a loathing for what he perceived to be a demonic, degenerate, rapacious America, its Muslim dependents – principally his own Saudi Arabia – and Jews.

"We are sure of Allah's victory – and our victory against the Americans and the Jews, as promised by the prophet, peace be upon him," Bin Laden declared in a rare interview with a US television-network journalist three months ago.

Then, with chilling deliberation, he proceeded to recite the Koranic injunction on Muslims to kill Jews: "Judgment day shall not come until the Muslims fight the Jews, whereas the Jews will hide behind trees and stones, and the tree and the stone will speak and say, 'Muslim, behind me is a Jew, come and kill him, except for the al-Gharghar tree, which is a Jewish plant.'"

Bin Laden was stripped of his Saudi citizenship in April 1994 for declaring the Saudi regime insufficiently Islamic and advocating violence against it. He went into exile in Sudan, and the State Department labeled him "one of the most significant sponsors of Sunni Islamic terrorist groups."

He is suspected of masterminding the World Trade Center bombing in New York in February 1993. One of the architects of the bombing was Ramzi Yousef, now serving a life term in a US jail. Yousef was living in a guest-house owned by Bin Laden in Pakistan

Bin Laden's international network

No one can be certain who is behind the twin bombings in Kenya and Tanzania. But Osama bin Laden is a prime suspect.

The Saudi-born millionaire runs an international terrorist organization sworn to fight the "godless" West. Bin Laden's aim is long and his reach is wide. His global activities include the following:

The US – Suspected of masterminding the February 1993 World Trade Center bombing in New York, using Ramzi Yousef as his principal instrument.

France – Was reportedly linked to funds transferred in 1996 to an Algerian group that is suspected of seven bombings in France.

Bosnia – Funded training camps for Islamic militants who fought the Serbs.

Chechnya – Funded military training camps for Islamic separatist rebels.

Tajikistan – Funded military training camps for Islamic separatist rebels.

Afghanistan – Established training camps for Islamic radicals, mainly Saudi and Sudanese, in the hills outside the eastern city of Jalalabad.

Pakistan – Convened about

150 clerics in 1998 to form the International Islamic Front for the Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders, a front to coordinate global terrorism.

Gaza – Is reported to have links to Hamas founder and spiritual leader, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin.

Jordan – Jordanian intelligence is reported to suspect Bin Laden of funding Islamic extremists opposed to the Hashemite throne.

Saudi Arabia – Bin Laden, whose Saudi citizenship was revoked in 1994, is believed to have supported the attack on a Saudi National Guard building in Riyadh that killed four Americans in November 1995.

Saudi Arabia – Intelligence analysts regard Bin Laden as the main suspect in the Khobar barracks bombing that killed 19 US servicemen in Dhahran in June 1996.

Yemen – Funded military training camps for Islamic extremists who attempted to bomb US soldiers in Yemen in late 1992.

The Philippines – Reportedly supported plots by Ramzi Yousef and Wali Khan to bomb US airplanes, and assassinate President Clinton and the pope in Manila.

The Philippines – Is reported to fund terrorist training camps for Islamic insurgents in

Mindanao.

Somalia – Funded and armed Islamic militants who shot down a US helicopter, killing several American soldiers and leading to a premature withdrawal of UN peace-keepers in December 1992.

Ethiopia – Egyptian intelligence suspects Bin Laden's involvement in an abortive plot by Islamic extremists to assassinate Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Addis Ababa in May 1995.

Eritrea – Trained Islamic troops from Eritrea and provided them with safe haven in Sudan.

Sudan – Established ties with Muslims fighting Christian and animist groups in Sudan. He also funded a terrorist training camp for Islamic extremists from around the world.

Egypt – Reportedly funds and trains members of al-Gama'at al-Islamiya, which is dedicated to toppling the secular government of President Hosni Mubarak.

Libya – Reportedly funds Islamic rebels fighting the regime of Muammar Gaddafi.

Tunisia – Supports Islamic extremists dedicated to toppling the secular government.

Algeria – Is linked to funds transferred to an Algerian group suspected of seven bombings in France.

– D.B.

Afghan refugee, Bin Laden expresses supreme indifference to report that the US last May described him as the most wanted man of earth and put a multi-million-dollar price on his head.

"It does not worry us what the Americans think," he told the US journalist, switching to the royal plural. (What worries us is pleasing Allah.) If Washington placed a high price on his head, Bin Laden was fully prepared to up the ante, issuing his third fatwa (religious injunction) in as many years that called on Muslims to kill Americans – any Americans, soldiers or civilians.

"We do not distinguish between those dressed in military uniforms and civilians," he told the American journalist. "They are all targets in this fatwa ... The fatwa includes all that share or take part in the killing of Muslims, assaulting holy places, or those who help the Jews occupy Moslem land."

It was this statement, broadcast on US network television, that prompted the State Department to issue a grimly prophetic public warning to its citizens in the Middle East and South Asia, an alert that was reiterated just days before the bombings in Africa last week.

The State Department urged American travelers to "maintain a high level of vigilance and alertness," and increased security at many US government facilities in the Middle East and South Asia.

It is easier to say what Bin Laden opposes than what he seeks to create. "The American government," he told his US television interviewer, is throwing away the lives of Americans in Saudi Arabia for the interests of the Jews.

"They [Jews] believe that all humans are created for their use, and they found that the Americans are the best-created beings for that use."

"So, we tell the Americans as a people, and we tell the mothers of soldiers, and American mothers in general, that they value their lives and those of their children, find a nationalistic government that will look after their interests and not the interest of the Jews." And then he reverted to his messianic tone: "It is our duty," he said, "to lead people to light."

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سكرا من الامم



Palestinian deputy speaker Rawhi Fatah counts hands this week as members of the PLC voted to approve Arafat's new cabinet. The 55-28 vote to endorse the new executive authority points to a lopsided majority that will do Arafat's bidding regardless of his requests. (Photo: AP)

Legalized corruption

Reform-minded Palestinians are alarmed at how their legislators rubber-stamped a cabinet that included ministers accused of incompetence and corruption, Steve Rodan reports

More than a year ago, Haidar Abdul-Shafi, quit the Palestinian Legislative Council, saying it was bereft of any power or influence.

This week he watched the legislature use the only power it had to rubber-stamp a cabinet filled with ministers it had labeled as corrupt and incompetent.

Abdul-Shafi, who in his political heyday was chairman of the Palestinian negotiating team at the Madrid peace conference in 1991, watched some of the same PLC members who battled for reform in the Palestinian Authority jump ship and join the cabinet they had vowed to topple.

"I must say this is difficult to explain," Abdul-Shafi, speaking from his home in Gaza City, says. "I think this is a problem of character."

The speeches in the PLC were eloquent. The opposition to Yasser Arafat's 28-member cabinet was unprecedented. But PLC members and Fatah activists agree that the 55-28 vote (there were three abstentions) to endorse the new executive authority pointed to a lopsided majority that will do Arafat's bidding regardless of his requests.

Simply put, they say, the PLC, in its first major test, has turned into a rubber stamp. Many of the oppositionists of yesterday are today's ministers.

"This has only supported the decision I had made to leave the council," Abdul-Shafi says.

In retrospect, PLC members and analysts say, Arafat chose his cabinet according to one criterion — ensuring that it would obtain the legislature's approval. Fatah members of the PLC who were seen as active and popular were dubbed candidates for a ministerial post. Those who had demonstrated independence and clamored for reform were favored.

Then, the candidates were brought in to meet Arafat and

assure their loyalty. As many Palestinians saw it, the job was not too difficult.

Heading a ministry means an excellent salary, luxury car and, perhaps most important, patronage for family and friends. It was an offer too tempting for most.

"A lot of what happened has to do with co-optation," says Ghassan Khatib, director of the Jerusalem Media Communications Center.

"In this reshuffle of the cabinet, Arafat selected those actively critical, outspoken and with credibility in the street to stem the growing opposition in the council against

them. Arafat knew from the start that he had a majority on whom he could count to win big.

FEW PALESTINIAN sources believe that Arafat had any need to get tough. For many, his indication that he regarded the vote on the new cabinet as a vote of confidence was enough.

Just in case it wasn't, there was an additional factor. In an economy that is dependent on Israeli jobs and PA licenses, any PLC member would require the good graces of Arafat to ensure the future of his business or that of his family.

"Many PA officials have become agents of leading Israeli producers, such as Nesher, Tuva or Osem," a Palestinian analyst who did not want to be identified says. "You don't get these things or keep them unless you are on excellent terms with Arafat."

PLC member Hatem Abdul-Khader agrees.

"If Arafat had not imposed pressure, the PLC would not have voted for the cabinet," he says. "The approval was the result of pressure."

Arafat was so effective that one PLC member, Hussam Khader from the Nablus-area refugee camp of Balata, stood up in the legislature and made the following proposal. "Because Abu Amar [Arafat] has been leader for 30 years, I propose that the PLC declare him God of the Palestinian people."

The response was boos and one Fatah member rushed to attack Khader. PA sources say Arafat is now seeking to prosecute Khader for his statement.

In the end, Arafat had his way. Several Fatah members, such as Abbas Zaki, changed their vote.

They supported a cabinet in which Saadi Khrant, a leading member of the PLC's comptroller's committee, was named

Arafat welcomes his new cabinet with the New Testament and the Koran on the table of his Gaza City office.

industry minister. Nabil Amr, regarded as one of more vocal reformers, also became a minister.

Hisham Abdul Razik, who not a year ago tried to discuss PA corruption on official Palestinian television, is minister in charge of Palestinian prisoners in Israel jails.

In an interview with PA radio, Abdul-Razik says the issue of Palestinian prisoners is among the most important and this could be properly dealt with only at the ministerial level.

Abdul-Khader has another view. "He has changed," he says, of the Gaza legislator.

WHAT APPEARS most painful to PLC opponents of the new cabinet is that it virtually ensures the end of any serious effort to pursue corruption in government.

In May 1997, the PA state comptroller completed a report — circulated but never released — that found extensive abuses in all government ministries. The government audit found that nearly half the Palestinian Authority's \$800 million annual budget had been wasted through corruption and mismanagement.

A PLC committee then recommended that three ministers — International Cooperation and Planning Minister Nabil Shaath, Civil Affairs Minister Jamil Tarifi, and Transportation Minister Ali Qawasme — be prosecuted for graft.

Arafat then appointed his own commission, which PA sources say uncovered more corruption. This report was never released.

These three reports did not result in any changes. In the new cabinet, Shaath, Tarifi and Qawasme retain their positions. Tarifi says he regards his appointment as a vindication of the corruption charges.

"By giving a vote of confidence to this government, the PLC has

legalized corruption," Hussam Khader says.

"I feel sorry for those who voted for the cabinet to preserve their own personal interests. Some of these people were opposed to the PA for years, only to now accept a ministry. These people know well that they don't have the authority to appoint employees or directors-general or even unify ministerial offices."

Arafat's only changes in the cabinet were to fire one minister and demote two others regarded as the most active and effective in the executive.

Education minister Yasser Amr was regarded as aging; agriculture minister Abdul Jawad Salah was said to anger Arafat when the minister tried to hire staffers on the basis of competence rather than Fatah patronage.

The demotion of higher education minister Hanan Ashrawi to that of tourism minister is regarded as something of a mystery, but Fatah representatives say Arafat succumbed to widespread resentment toward her.

In her position, Ashrawi, who as both a woman and Christian is regarded as an outsider in Palestinian ruling circles, was invited by prominent universities and traveled frequently abroad.

Both Ashrawi and Salah refused to serve in the new cabinet although the former stressed that she would be willing to serve Arafat in the future. Later, newly-appointed minister Salah Taamari failed to attend a swearing-in ceremony of the cabinet and Palestinian sources say he too has resigned.

For his part, Abdul-Khader says he doesn't believe the PLC will have enough independent-minded members left to pursue corruption allegations.

The whole issue of corruption will be much more difficult because there won't be enough members that will want to follow this up, he says. "His opposition will not influence things."

SOME ANALYSTS and Palestinian opposition figures, however, say they detect changes.

Zakaria al-Qaq, a leading Palestinian analyst, says a close look at the arithmetic shows Arafat didn't win as big as it appears. Take away the PLC members appointed to cabinet positions and pit the rest of the legislators who supported the new executive against its opponents, and the latter wins.

Another indication, the analysts say, is the spate of recent polls that demonstrate Palestinian discontent.

A Jerusalem Media Communications Center poll of 1,204 respondents taken after the cabinet vote reported that 56.8 percent didn't believe the cabinet reshuffle would improve the PA. More than 70% of the respondents said PA corruption would not decrease — with about half of those predicting it would increase — under the new cabinet.

Khatib agrees.

"The reshuffle will not have any consequence on the peace process and Palestinian political relations because there is no change in the political composition," he says. "It's the same kind of people."

More telling, perhaps, is a poll taken by the Fatah-aligned Arab Studies Society that report Arafat's approval rating at 48%, a sharp drop from about six months ago, when it was 78%. Some Palestinian analysts believe Arafat's real approval rating is closer to 25%.

Palestinians in several major

West Bank and Gaza Strip towns say they are hearing more open criticism of Arafat than ever before. In some towns, such as Hebron, Palestinians on street corners term the PA chief an Israeli agent and mafia chief.

"In our culture, a believer will not be bitten by the same snake twice," a Palestinian analyst who did not want to be identified says. "The Palestinians have been bitten by Arafat and now it's over."

"Arafat will never ever win again if a democratic election is held. That's why his people want to put their hands on as much money as possible."

Many PLC members are aware of this emerging image of the council.

Some opposition Fatah members, such as Jamal Shubaki, pledge they will try to depose corrupt or incompetent ministers

by holding a vote of no-confidence for individual members of the cabinet.

But other PLC members and analysts doubt this will be allowed.

"I am saying that Arafat's will is greater than yours or that of the PLC," Khader says. "I have absolutely lost my confidence in the PLC."

In his Gaza home, Abdul-Shafi, the once-PLC president, feels unrest on the Palestinian street. He won't predict any changes but he is certain that ordinary Palestinians are being shaken out of their apathy.

"The public is becoming more frustrated and more aware of what is happening," he says. "[Still] It is difficult to say what will happen in the future."

Mohammed Najib contributed to this report.

(Communicated)

"TOVEI HA'IR" RESIDENCE OFFERS NEW VISTAS FOR RELIGIOUS RETIREES

By Bracha Osofsky

"The best gift children can give their parents - and senior citizens can give themselves - is a home where they can actively enjoy their golden years in comfort, dignity and luxurious surroundings," says Josef Paluch, general manager of the Tovei Ha'ir Residence for religious retirees in the center of Jerusalem. "At Tovei Ha'ir, we free retirees of the burdens of housekeeping and the worry of security so they can live their lives to the fullest."

Adjoining the five-star Concorde Hotel, the Tovei Ha'ir Residence provides a rare combination of luxury and warm, religious surroundings. Residents can choose from fully-serviced apartments ranging from studio to two and-a-half rooms, each elegantly furnished and including kitchenette and balcony. In-house facilities include a dining room with the services of the Concorde Hotel, swimming pool and health club.

Still, Paluch emphasizes, what makes Tovei Ha'ir really special is its warm, *haimish* environment, special *Shabbat* and *Yom Tov* atmosphere and the activities that bring its residents together. "The community life here includes lectures, concerts, *shu"rim* in English and Hebrew, day trips and a Hebrew Ulpan. Several months ago, we expanded our community even further by inviting Jerusalem's English-speaking golden-agers to join us for a monthly Cultural Circle of discussions, presentations and performances. It has become a very popular event in the *oleh* community."

Well aware that many potential residents for Tovei Ha'ir are parents from overseas whose children and grandchildren already live in Israel, Paluch and his wife, Evelynne, who directs marketing for the residence, do all they can to welcome new *olim*. "We have initiated very successful family weekends where the residents host their children and grandchildren at the Concorde Hotel at special reduced rates, and everyone enjoys spending *Shabbat* together," says Evelynne Paluch. "And our professional staff is dedicated solely to making all of our residents feel completely at home."

The Paluchs are quick to reassure retirees that becoming part of the Tovei Ha'ir family is no more expensive than moving into the best retirement homes in the country. They stress that they have created flexible terms of payment so that people need not necessarily sell their apartments in order to finance their stay at Tovei Ha'ir.

"Around the western world, retirees are realizing that it is advantageous to move into sheltered residences and enjoy an enhanced quality of life while they are strong and healthy," says Paluch, adding that Tovei Ha'ir also maintains an excellent nursing wing for those requiring special care. "Our residents are the best proof of how active, fulfilling and enjoyable life can be when you retire in the right surroundings."

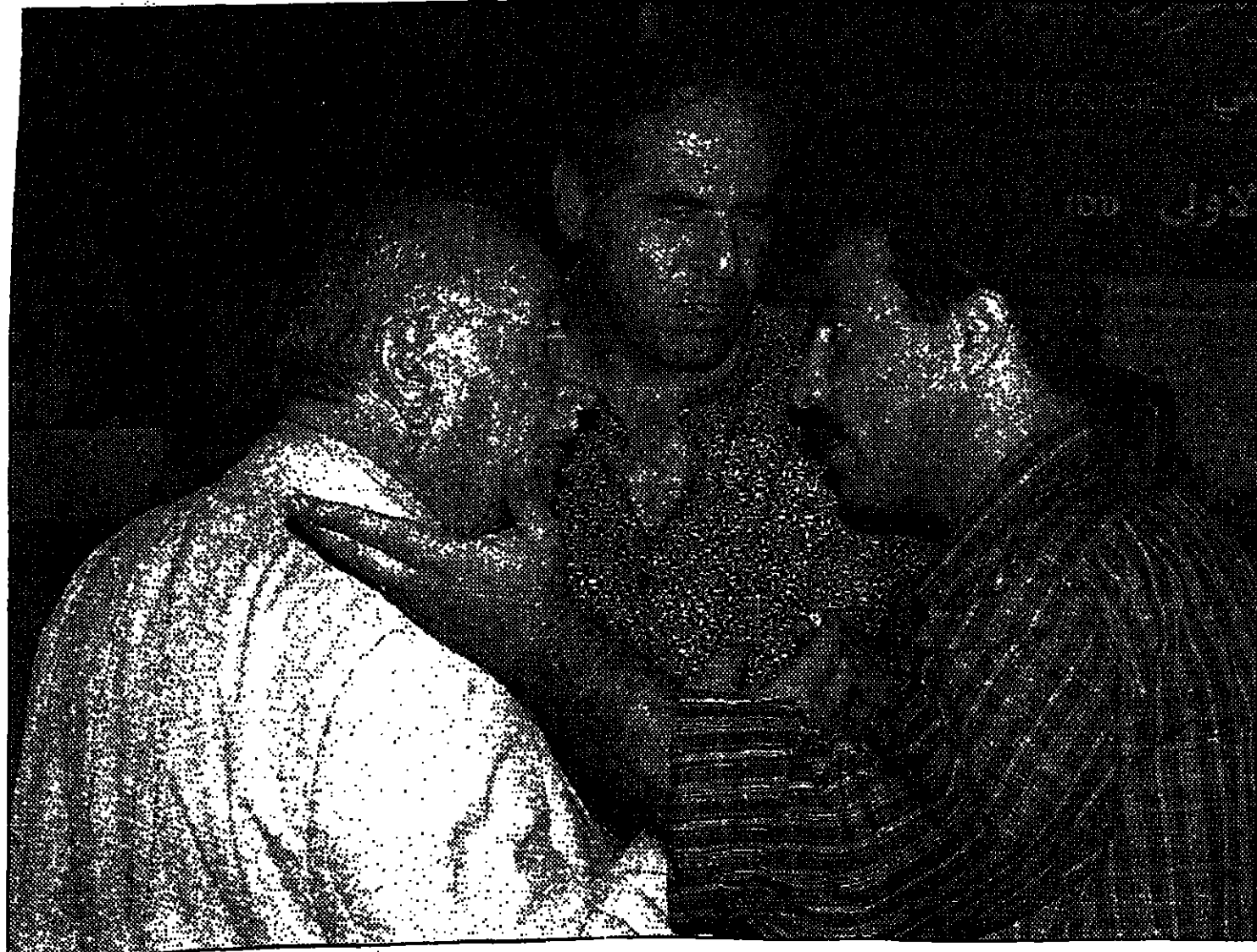
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Palestinian lawmakers Hussam Khader, right, Faraj al Sarraf, center and Finance Minister Mohammed Nashashibi argue whether to approve the new Palestinian cabinet. "Because Arafat has been leader for 30 years, I propose that the PLC declare him God of the Palestinian people," Khader said facetiously.

When the yodeling turned shrill

As Israeli ambassador to Switzerland when the dispute over the missing savings of Holocaust victims erupted, Dr. Gabriel Padon felt like a witness to a particularly nasty divorce with both sides making a point of not understanding each other, at the top of their voices.

Despite the \$1.2 billion settlement reached on Wednesday in New York between Swiss banks and Jewish claimants, says Padon, a bad taste will long linger.

Padon, who retired from the foreign service when he returned from his Bern posting last October at age 66, believes that the Swiss bankers behaved with heavy-handed obtuseness and arrogance. But he also believes that the Jewish negotiators, and their American political supporters, should not be viewed as selfless knights righting a historic wrong. Their angry rhetoric, Padon believes, unnecessarily complicated the issue and was often aimed at their own varied constituencies rather than the Swiss.

With both sides accusing the other of greed, duplicity and blindness to history, the highly emotional dispute threatened to spin out of control.

Sanctions against Swiss banks amounting to some \$20 billion were mooted in several American states and Swiss politicians warned that such moves would be countered with sanctions against American companies.

Mutual demonization reached the point where the Swiss Jewish community came to fear for its safety, says Padon. Hundreds of anonymous hate letters and calls over the banking issue were received at the Israeli embassy during his tour.

In an interview this week, the retired diplomat said the Israeli government should have become involved in the dispute.

"It should at least have counseled the Jewish negotiating partners to find an equitable solution and not let this thing continue forever."

Before taking up his Swiss posting in 1995, Padon asked foreign minister Shimon Peres what position he should adopt on the bank issue.

"He told me that the government had authorized the World Jewish Restitution Organization to deal with the matter and that I should not intervene. I was just to observe and report."

The WJRO is headed by Edgar Bronfman, president of the World Jewish Congress, and includes nine international Jewish organizations. Its prominent spokesmen include Israel Singer, secretary-general of the WJC, and Avraham Burg, head of the Jewish Agency.

In the past, Israel did attempt to negotiate the bank issue with the Swiss but was repeatedly rebuffed on the grounds that the state was not in existence during the Second World War and therefore had no standing in the matter.

"At one point, around 1960, the Israeli ambassador was accused, when he brought this up, of interfering in internal Swiss affairs," says Padon. One of the reasons for this attitude, he says, was Switzerland's desire not to upset the Arabs. The Swiss did discuss

the issue with Jewish organizations like the Joint Distribution Committee but there was little headway.

The attitude of the Swiss bankers over the years to the question of Holocaust deposits was as cold and unfeeling as a Zurich bank vault.

When heirs of Holocaust victims attempted to inquire about deposits their relatives may have made before the war, says Padon, they were told that they must inquire separately at every one of the bank's branches around the country at a charge of \$400 for each branch inquiry. In those instances where the name of a relative was indeed found, the person inquiring was asked to produce a death certificate. If the bank officials accepted the argument that the Germans had not issued death certificates at Auschwitz, they nevertheless demanded a will showing that the applicant was entitled to the money.

When the bank issue began to heat up in 1995, some leading Swiss bankers stoked the flames with outrageous remarks.

"Robert Studer, who was president of the Union Bank of Switzerland, one of the country's three biggest banks, said that all the money of Holocaust victims added up to peanuts," says Padon. "He said that the Jews murdered at Auschwitz were barefoot and didn't have Swiss bank accounts."

When stories about the behavior of Swiss bankers towards Holocaust heirs were first made public two years ago, says Padon, there was widespread shock in the Swiss public and a sense of shame. "People couldn't believe that Swiss banks had behaved like that."

This feeling was accompanied by a strong wave of sympathy for Holocaust survivors. At the initiative of schoolchildren in Bern, a nationwide collection was launched for needy Holocaust survivors, mainly in eastern Europe, who had never received compensation. Some of the money went to Amcha, an Israeli organization which provides psychological counseling and other services to aged Holocaust survivors.

Gradually, however, the atmosphere changed as negotiations between the Swiss bankers and the WJRO grew more acrimonious.

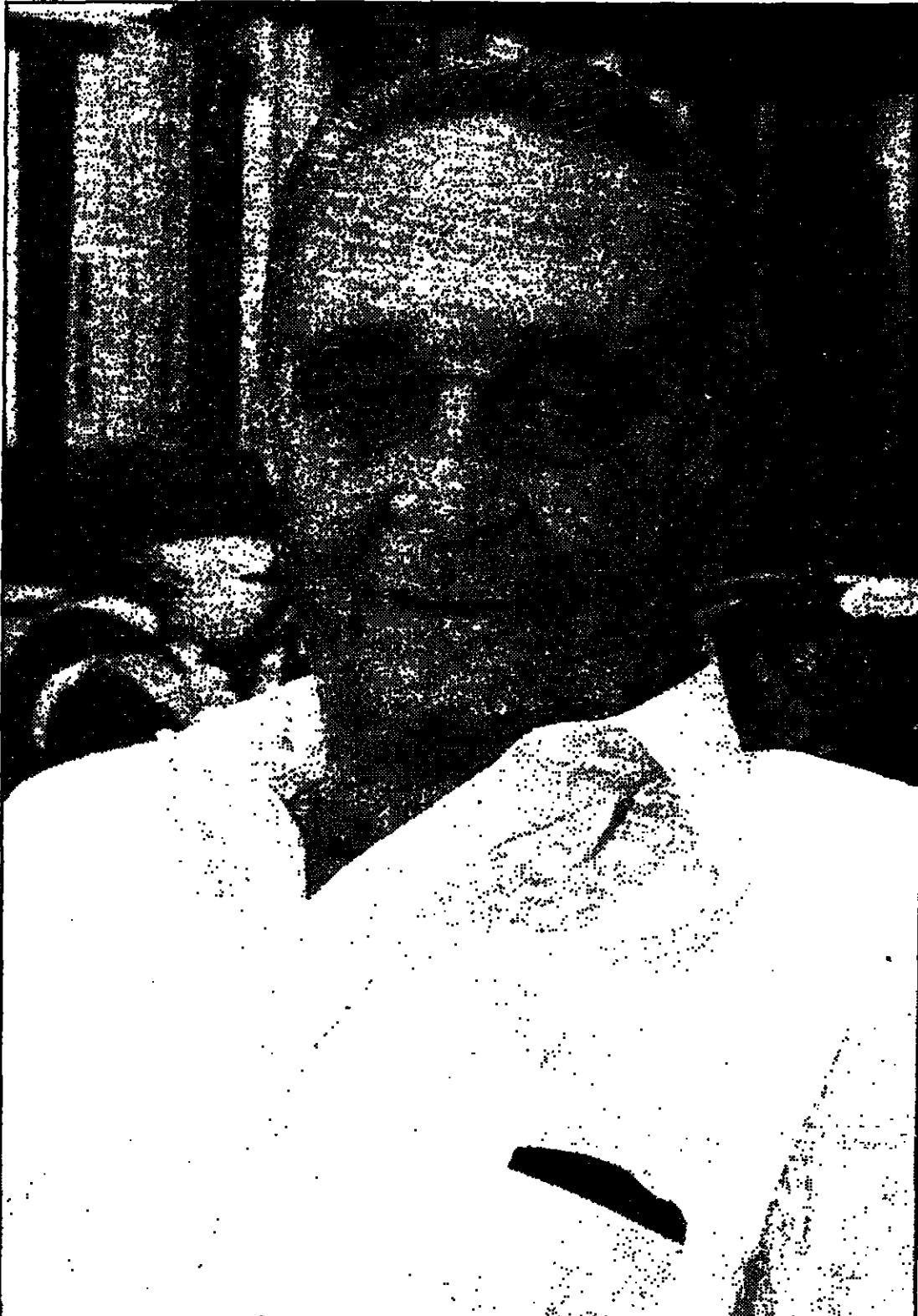
"I think the Jewish representatives made a lot of mistakes with fiery rhetoric that was not necessary," says Padon. "They didn't understand the Swiss mentality. They didn't speak of Swiss banks but of 'the Swiss.' Exaggerated statements like 'The Swiss are just interested in money' made the Swiss feel that their whole nation was in the dock."

The issue rapidly broadened from bank deposits to Switzerland's role in the war, including its trade with Germany.

"The Swiss didn't have a choice," says Padon. "They were completely surrounded and they needed coal from the Germans and other materials. All neutral countries traded with Germany. So did the US before it entered the war. It sold Germany material that was very useful to its war industries."

There was, however, no mitigating factor to offset Switzerland's

In the wake of this week's settlement of claims over dormant Holocaust bank accounts, Israel's former ambassador to Switzerland recalls how the dispute turned acrimonious. The bad taste will linger, he tells Abraham Rabinovich



Dr. Gabriel Padon: The World Jewish Restitution Organization 'used a sledgehammer to crack a nut.' The Swiss, for their part, 'tried to wriggle out of every agreement.'

(Isaac Harari)

attitude towards Jewish refugees. Some 30,000 Jews were turned back from its borders to almost certain death. After the Anschluss of Austria in 1938, many Austrian Jews tried to flee across the border and Switzerland asked Germany to indicate Jewish citizens by putting a "J" in their passports so that the Swiss could keep them out.

"But there's no justification to

demonize the Swiss like some leaders of the World Jewish Congress and others did," says Padon. "There were statements that made it appear like the Swiss made the Holocaust. They haven't got a clear conscience but they didn't make the Holocaust. There were a lot of Swiss who helped Jews enter illegally. The chief of police in St. Gallen helped thousands of Jews in from Austria and

was sent to jail for this 'crime.'"

The Swiss, says Padon, were honestly baffled by the fury of the attack launched against them by the WJRO and its supporters. The anti-Swiss invective directly contradicted the image of Switzerland's upright behavior during the war inculcated into every Swiss child, an image central to the national myth.

"They believe they behaved very courageously during the war," says Padon. "Their history

books show that they stood up to the Germans and took in about 100,000 refugees of different nationalities, including some 29,000 Jews. They don't mention the 30,000 Jews who were turned away. They see themselves as having provided a great humanitarian service through the Red Cross."

As US Senator Alfonse D'Amato of New York raked the Swiss banks in Senate hearings and other American politicians and British Jewish spokesmen joined in the attack, the Swiss grew increasingly frustrated.

"They began to say 'What do you want from Switzerland?'" says Padon. "They said 'This is exaggerated. We didn't kill the Jews. We didn't fight the war. We were neutral.'"

Defensiveness soon gave way to anger. "They said 'The Jews only want our money.' Some right-wing circles said that it was all a conspiracy between the Jews and American and British financial interests to ruin the Swiss banking system to their own benefit."

Many could not understand why the issue had suddenly emerged 50 years after the war.

Among the anonymous letters sent to the Israeli embassy were expressions of regret that all the Jews had not been gassed. One letter writer asked how Bronfman could preach morality to the Swiss when his father had built his fortune on bootlegging liquor during the American prohibition. Extreme right-wingers called for a boycott of Jewish shops.

Painted swastikas and dark threats suddenly confronted the Jewish community of 18,000, many of whom were already upset, as Swiss, at what they believed to be the unjustified rhetoric being used by the Jewish negotiators, says Padon.

Meanwhile, the Swiss authorities began to abandon long-held positions in an attempt to appease their accusers and bring the issue to a close. For the first time, they dropped the sacred secrecy of their banking records and opened them to outside audit by a team headed by former US Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker.

Volcker is to issue the team's findings on unclaimed Holocaust accounts by the end of the year and the leading Swiss banks have pledged to meet any personal claims based on the audit.

In addition, Swiss banks and industries established a humanitarian fund of some \$200 million for needy Nazi victims, unconnected to the issue of Holocaust deposits.

Last month, the major Swiss banks offered a 'global' settlement of some \$600 million to resolve class-action lawsuits filed in US federal courts contending that the banks had hoarded Jewish Holocaust-era assets. The offer was dismissed by Burg, co-chairman of the WJRO, as "very humiliating." Some WJRO sources indicated a target of \$1.6 billion. Bronfman was quoted by the *Forward* newspaper in New York as calling for a \$3 billion settlement. The settlement reached in New York this week calls for a payment of \$1.2 billion over three years.

Another far-reaching indication of new Swiss flexibility, notes

Padon, was its agreement to set up a committee of eminent historians, most of them foreign, to reexamine Switzerland's role in the war. Israeli historian Shaul Friedlander is among a number of Jewish scholars on the committee.

Under examination is Switzerland's attitude towards refugees and its acceptance of payment from the Germans in the form of gold looted from the banks of occupied Europe and the bodies of dead Jews. These findings will presumably lead to a rewriting of Switzerland's history books.

Both the creation of the Volcker audit and the historical review were passed unanimously by the Swiss parliament during the initial wave of sympathy for Jews abused by the banking system. "I'm sure that today these wouldn't pass, at least not unanimously," says Padon.

The WJRO negotiators have been "using a sledgehammer to crack a nut," he says. "There is this belief that the harder you hit the more you will get. But after this fight Israel will still have to do business with Switzerland. We have good and very important relations, especially economic."

For all the pressure on the Swiss to provide funds, notes Padon, there is still no agreement on the Jewish side as to how the funds will be distributed — to whom and by what criteria.

Asked whether he believed those attacking the Swiss were motivated by a sense of historical outrage and/or by personal considerations such as ego and political ambitions, Padon said, "everybody has his agenda. Bronfman has his, Singer and Burg have theirs. The WJC has many vice presidents and everybody has to put a word in and escalate and show he's a tough guy."

The Swiss, for their part, could have prevented the issue from festering if they had not in the past "tried to wriggle out of every agreement" and had acted like "menschen," said Padon.

During his posting in Bern, Padon was asked by a number of leading Swiss politicians, including then president Pascal Delamuraz, why Israel, rather than the WJRO, was not negotiating on behalf of the Holocaust heirs. "I told them it was because Switzerland had refused to negotiate with us. They were not aware of that."

"When I was ambassador I never got any feedback from the government on my reports or on my requests for instructions. I think the Israeli government should have gotten into the act. The Swiss government wanted a solution as long as it didn't create an impression that they've caved in."

The Israeli Foreign Ministry last December rejected a Swiss offer seeking Israel as a "guarantor" in settlement of the issue.

"This is absolutely not a bilateral issue," said Gideon Meir, the Foreign Ministry's adviser on Jewish affairs. "It is an issue for the entire Jewish people."

There is, however, a distinction to be made, Padon argues, not only between Swiss banks and "the Swiss" but also between the interests of "the Jews," as represented by international organizations, and the interests of Israel.

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סוכן מן הארץ



Ori Orr draws fire from a resident in Ofakim, the second stop on his self-rehabilitation campaign.

(Photos: Jonathan Bloom)



Labor Party members Eli Bonen (left) and Danny Yisraeli of Ofakim have nothing but praise for Orr. 'A real Moroccan wouldn't have been insulted by what Orr said. Only an outsider would be,' says Moroccan-born Bonen.

Orr comes to Ofakim. Ever since the Labor MK shot his mouth off about the Sephardim and Moroccans, that idea has sounded like Louis Farrakhan coming to Bnei Brak. But, that's not the way it was on Monday, not at all.

As Orr's scheduled 7:30 p.m. arrival approached, there was a distinct lack of electricity in the town square, where a few hundred people sat around talking and eating. "This only interests the politicians. The regular people here don't pay any attention to it, they're just trying to get through the day," said Meir Dadoush, 24, an unemployed son of Moroccan immigrants sitting with his friends at the Shipudei Hayovel restaurant.

Orr's July 28 interview in Ha'aretz, in which he presented a long list of complaints about Sephardim, especially Moroccans, blaming them for their estrangement from the Labor Party, has made him persona non grata in Israeli politics. Ofakim, the flagship of dead-end Negev development towns, was stop No. 2 on his self-rehabilitation campaign.

Sunday Orr was in Hatzor Haglilit in Galilee, Tuesday he headed to Kiryat Gat and Wednesday he stopped in Ramle.

His gesture was less bold than it seemed, though: Orr wouldn't be going out to the public squares and shopping centers, to the people at large, but only to Labor Party branch offices and homes of the faithful.

Outside Ofakim's Labor clubhouse, a crowd had gathered — all party members, nearly all Sephardim, many born in Morocco. Yet nobody was protesting, nobody was throwing tomatoes. Far from it. The loudest voices were singing Orr's praises.

"The poor guy had the guts to tell the truth, and everybody jumps on him and tries to tear him apart," said Anat Abecassis, 37, the daughter of Moroccan immigrants. "The Moroccans are too sensitive, they're too easily insulted."

Orr faces Ofakim's heat

Ori Orr took his apology road show to Ofakim this week, and got a different reception from the one he expected, as Larry Derfner reports

"What does he have to apologize for?" demanded Danny Israeli, 47, whose parents came from Iran and whose wife is Moroccan. "Everything he said was right. Sephardim just like to act hurt, to play the victim, but anyone who wants to succeed, can succeed."

Loudest of all was Eli Bonen, 60, born in Morocco. "Ori Orr only said what we've been saying for 20 years," he said. "Moroccans can't tell right from wrong. You can know a Moroccan all your life and one day he'll kill you." If Bonen was joking, he was only joking a little.

Suddenly he started clapping his

hands and chanting the sports chant. "He is great, he is great, he is great." Orr had arrived. Smiling and shaking hands, the MK made his way through the crowd and into the clubhouse.

About 50 party members and a dozen or so reporters and photographers followed. There was no air conditioning, only a single fan — directed courteously at Orr. Sitting there was like being trapped inside a thick, hot cloud. Coming out the door to breathe, the first hit of night air actually felt chilly. But these were hardy folks, and most stayed in their seats, thrashing things out in Labor's suffocating box of a clubhouse for a couple of hours.

Seventy-five percent of the voters in this town of 25,000 voted for Binyamin Netanyahu in the 1996 prime ministerial elections. Shas won a plurality of the votes for Knesset. About 60 percent of the residents are Sephardim, about two-thirds of them of Moroccan descent.

So what exactly was going on here? Weren't all Sephardim supposed to be furious at Orr? Weren't Sephardim in the Labor Party supposed to be the most furious of all — demanding, in the words of Labor MK Eitan Cabel, that Orr be "kicked out, sent packing, from the party?"

Yet here was Bonen taking the floor, saying, "A real Moroccan wouldn't have been insulted by what Orr said, only somebody from the outside would have been," and getting the loudest applause of the night, except for when Orr was introduced.

There seemed to be a failure of communication here. Orr kept saying he hadn't meant to badmouth the Sephardim, and insisting that his words had been twisted by Ha'aretz reporter Daniel Ben-Simon. Orr's cheering section, however, kept saying he'd been right to badmouth the Sephardim because they deserved it.

A MAN named Rafi got up and told him, "As a Moroccan, I was not insulted by what you said — I was insulted by the way the Labor Party ambushed you. Why didn't they go after Bibi [prime minister Binyamin Netanyahu] for the way he treated David Levy? Sephardim are always hurting each other, always holding each other back. We never help each other get ahead the way the Ashkenazim do."

This was not what Orr had in mind. Sitting with evident discomfort through this parade of Sephardi breast-beating, he finally spoke up, reproaching Rafi. "We have to stop speaking in terms of 'us and them,' he said. "That's what created the 'ethnic genie' in the first place," Orr told him.

Rafi looked around as if to ask, "Did I say something wrong?" But not everybody was on Orr's side. The professional politicians in the audience went along with the supposed Sephardi consensus — that Orr had maligned the Sephardim and done the Labor Party enormous damage.

"As a friend of yours, I was hurt very badly by what you said, and so was my family," said Jimmy Abecassis, head of the Histadrut Works Committee in Ofakim. Sa'adio Gouzi, Ofakim's deputy mayor, told Orr he was getting a "distorted picture" by speaking only to Labor crowds. Outside, the sentiment was bitter-

ly against him, and, by extension, against Labor, Gozlan said.

"After [Labor Party chairman Ehud] Barak made his apology to the Sephardim, we thought maybe we could bring some of the Likudniks over to our side. But now, after this, what are we supposed to tell them? That you didn't mean it?" Gozlan demanded.

Like the few other critics in the audience, Gozlan was respectful but direct. "I read that article over two or three times, word for word, and what you said was complete nonsense," he told Orr. "You made an awful mistake."

Orr stood his ground. He was relaxed, unemotional. He maintained that the point he was trying to make in the interview was

that endemic poverty had wrought damage on Sephardim — especially Moroccans, who, as the largest Sephardi ethnic group, were the worst off. He insisted he didn't blame the Sephardim for lacking curiosity, being resentful, or anything else he had said — he blamed their conditions, as well as the Sephardi political leaders who exploited those conditions.

"I never believed that any group of people were more Israeli or less Israeli than any other," he continued, denying yet another remark he had made about Sephardim.

Addressing his critics, he said, "If you had been sitting in that room, listening to what I actually said during the interview, you wouldn't have come away feeling insulted." But the many who believed Orr didn't need to be convinced, and the few who didn't believe him couldn't be convinced.

Outside the clubhouse, Abecassis said he's been hearing

no end of hostile remarks about the Labor Party from local Histadrut members since the Orr interview was published. He said he didn't think the controversy would hurt Labor in the November municipal elections, but that the national elections could be a different story.

"I know the Likud is just waiting to use Orr in its political advertisements against Labor," he said. "As a political professional, I'll tell you my opinion: I don't know what effect it's going to have. By the time the elections come, this whole affair could be swallowed by events, there could be another Enebbe, who knows? It's too early to tell."

The air was breathable outside. One could look around, and wonder what the people in all these apartments in Ofakim, and in other development towns very much like Ofakim, think of Ori Orr and the Labor Party these days. The rousing show of support he received from a large majority inside the Labor clubhouse may well have left Orr with a distorted picture. He, should remember that when the heat gets really intense in the desert, mirages sometimes appear.

To die in Ofakim



Ofakim residents Ori Orr and Danny Israeli (left) and Eli Bonen (right) are seen in a public gathering in Ofakim.

For guys in their early 20s, it's all about the table of Ofakim's Shipudei Hayovel restaurant. Ori Orr, unemployed and hopeless. But none of these issues, they said, would have any effect on how they voted.

Dodi Mazouz, Hana Amoyal and Meir Dadoush, all Sephardi, all unemployed, all poor. A theme, it seems, is "half and half."

"The older people got all worked up about Ori Orr, but the young people here don't care about politics," said Mazouz. He voted for Netanyahu in 1996. Despite the 12 percent unemployment in Ofakim, he said, "I don't blame Netanyahu in the government. Ofakim is always in a depression, and now people in the capital of the country are starting to feel the way we always feel. I voted for Netanyahu not because of my personal situation, but because of the situation in the country, because there was no security. If there were elections today, I think I'd give him another

chance." Dadoush, who said he didn't vote in the last election, and Mazouz, who said he won't vote in the next one, wouldn't vote. Most of the other people here vote. But they don't vote for Netanyahu. They vote for the Labor Party. They vote for the Labor Party because they say, "Sephardim, Sephardim, you say to all these young people, 'You're going to die in Ofakim.' Every four years they come out and vote Labor. But it's no use. It makes no difference, because whenever it comes time to vote, the same thing happens."

Amoyal asked, "You ask any kid here what his dream is, and he'll tell you, 'To be like Ori Orr.'"

He just said it out loud? "Not at all," the young men answered. "We're not upset about it. And some of them — not even Liberman Mazouz and Amoyal — have been impressed by Netanyahu's visit to Ofakim last December, when the prime minister handed out 500 jobs to unemployed locals."

"You say that people didn't really get jobs," said Mazouz. "I heard those kinds of promises 25,000 times," said Amoyal.

They complained about busy schools and no prospects for work. So why didn't they leave? "Who has the money to leave?" asked Amoyal. "If you want to go to college, you have to go to Beer Sheva, and that costs money."

"And even if you do find a job somewhere else, like Beer Sheva, and get out of here, you're going to have to spend all your salary on rent," said Dadoush. "So if you're going to die, you might as well die at home."

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Unscripted drama on Capitol Hill

Not even Watergate, with all of its mystery, history and high drama, prepared Congress for the next act of the showdown between Kenneth Starr and President Clinton.

The procedures covering the investigation of a president are all new, the laws haven't really been tested and the guidelines are ambiguous. If, as expected, independent counsel Starr presents Congress with a report of "substantial and credible information" about Clinton, congressional leaders and investigators will be creating ad hoc policy every step of the way.

"There's little guidance for how it should be handled," Jim Jordan, spokesman for Democrats on the House Judiciary Committee, said this week.

"We're in uncharted territory," a Republican staff member at the House Judiciary Committee added.

Neither the Constitution nor the law that created independent counsels provides much guidance.

The Constitution, in Article II, Section 4, says the president or vice president "shall be removed from office on impeachment for, and conviction of, treason, bribery or other high crimes and misdemeanors."

The independent counsel statute, enacted in 1978 after the Watergate scandals and updated three times since, says the counsel "shall advise the House of Representatives of any substantial and credible information which such independent counsel receives... that may constitute grounds for an impeachment." That advice is the crucial part of the law that has never been tested.

"The 'advise' requirement makes sense if you are investigating impeachable officials and you come across impeachable evidence," said Michael Simons, professor of law at St. John's University. "It doesn't presume a report in lieu of an indictment or in advance of an indictment."

The House is empowered to impeach, roughly the equivalent of an indictment, such a high governmental officer, and the Senate, with the chief justice presiding in the case of a president, conducts the actual trial and removes that person from office if found guilty.

Starr has indicated previously that he doesn't think a sitting president is indictable, but must

With the US president due to testify in the Lewinsky case on Monday, no one — not Bill Clinton, Kenneth Starr, nor Congress — knows how to proceed. The laws covering investigation of a president are untested and the guidelines ambiguous, Elaine S. Povich writes



Clinton's testimony on Monday will be a landmark in US history: Never before has a sitting president appeared before a grand jury for which he was a potential subject. (AP)

be impeached if he has violated the law.

"Starr's writing a report to Congress is a political act, not a prosecutorial act," Simons added, noting that impeachment is itself a political act, not a judicial one.

Starr and Clinton are embarking on uncharted waters themselves Monday when Clinton is scheduled to give testimony to Starr's grand jury investigating the Monica Lewinsky case. Never before has a sitting president appeared before a grand jury for which he was a potential subject.

Congress, the House of Representatives and the House Judiciary Committee are gearing up for any contingency, with an eye on history and another on the

practical task before them of receiving a report and deciding

"There's little guidance for how it should be handled"

— Democratic spokesman Jim Jordan

whether to proceed with an investigation, hearings and formulation of articles of impeachment.

There's little desire among top congressional leaders to rush the

process. Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, has suggested that a public apology by Clinton would circumvent any need for any impeachment proceeding. House Judiciary Committee Chairman Henry Hyde, R-Ill., has urged restraint. Even before Congress began its August recess, Hyde urged his colleagues to "Be judicious. Don't speculate. Maintain the dignity of the institution."

Hyde and his committee Republicans have hired Chicago attorney David Shippers, a former US attorney and chief of the Department of Justice Organized Crime and Racketeering Section in Chicago, to direct their investigation. Hyde has said the team is

in place just in case it is needed, but not in anticipation that Starr will, in fact, send the panel a report on Clinton.

Democrats on the panel, led by Rep. John Conyers, D-Mich., selected Washington attorney Abbe Lowell to review any report from Starr. Lowell is a Washington insider who represented former House Speaker Jim Wright in the House ethics case that eventually led to Wright's resignation. He also served as an adjunct professor at the George Washington University school of law and has been a commentator on the Starr probe for MSNBC.

"I think the best way to describe our role is to liken the Democratic team to a group of volunteer firefighters in the station where we are waiting for a bell to ring," Lowell said this week. "It may not ring, but if it does ring we have to have a truck and a ladder and a hose. We don't pre-suppose there will be a report and if there is a report that it will require action," he added. "But if there is and it does, we need to be ready."

In the 1974 Watergate investigation of President Nixon, special prosecutor Leon Jaworski never submitted a report. Instead, the House Judiciary Committee was requested by the full House to launch an investigation. The committee voted for three articles of impeachment against Nixon.

Jaworski's criminal probe was separate from the impeachment process. Nixon resigned rather than be impeached.

The only other president to face impeachment was Andrew Johnson in 1868, but the Senate fell one vote shy on three impeachment articles against him. Johnson was not renominated for the presidency.

In the aftermath of Watergate, the 1978 special counsel law was enacted and institutionalized the independent prosecutor. The prosecutor was linked with Congress via the report mechanism, but that mechanism has never been tested.

The closest parallel came in 1989 when then-federal Judge Alcee Hastings was impeached by the House for conspiring as a judge to obtain a \$150,000 bribe in an FBI sting operation. He was convicted by the Senate and removed from office, becoming only the seventh judge convicted after impeachment proceedings. In 1993, he was elected to Congress as a Democrat from Florida and serves there today.

Prior to his impeachment, Hastings had been acquitted of criminal charges. But two Florida judges filed a complaint under the 1990 Judicial Conduct and Disability Act, prompting automatic empaneling of a five-judge board to look into the complaint. The five-judge panel then appointed attorney John Doar, who had served as counsel to the House Judiciary Committee in the impeachment hearings of Nixon, to investigate Hastings.

Doar's investigation of Hastings, which took three years, roughly parallels Starr's investigation of Clinton. Doar filed a report to the judges, who forwarded it to the House Judiciary Committee.

Doar also testified before the committee.

"What we are doing, among other things, is looking at the precedents in the House, to protect the interests of the minority," Lowell said. "We are looking at the two impeachment hearings of presidents and others. The Alcee Hastings proceedings are part of the material. The (proceedings on) the judges are particularly useful."

BEFORE 1986, only four jurists had been impeached by the House and convicted by the Senate. But between 1986 and 1989, three federal judges were removed from the bench by the impeachment process: Hastings, Harry E. Claiborne of Nevada and Walter L. Nixon of Mississippi.

In the case of Judge Nixon, the Supreme Court ruled in 1993 that the Senate's use of a shortcut procedure to hear testimony, rather than trying the full Senate up with it, was permissible.

In arguing for the shortcut procedure, a special, 12-member committee that would take evidence, the then-solicitor general of the United States said the Constitution gives the Senate sole power to decide how to run its impeachment trials. He said the requirements are those stated in the Constitution: the Senate must be under special oath, a two-thirds vote is necessary to convict and remove someone from office, and when the president is tried, the chief justice of the United States must preside over the Senate.

That solicitor general argued that the framers of the Constitution considered the impeachment process an important check on the president and on the judiciary. That solicitor general was Kenneth W. Starr, who today as an officer of the court, is an integral part of that judiciary. (Newsday)

Dry Bones



GRAPEVINE

By GREER FAY CASHMAN

Gesher leader David Levy took a brief break from politics to embrace the latest additions to his family — twin grandsons born at the end of last week to daughter Ilanit Roosh, 27. The twins bring the current total of Levy's grandchildren to 24.

PRESIDENT Ezer Weizman, most of the political spectrum including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and leading figures from the IDF, intelligence and security services flocked to Caesarea this week for the marriage of Sagit Mordechai and Gil Kishniowski. The bride is the daughter of Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and his first wife Pnina, who had the misfortune to fall off the crowded rostrum under the bridal canopy and do such serious injury to her shoulder that she had to be taken to the hospital. The father of the bride arranged for her to be treated immediately and returned to the banquet hall before the wedding festivities were over.

SUPER model Natalie Attiya had a somewhat more modest affair when she married architect Agnon Granot in a synagogue ceremony in Ramat Aviv. What was dramatic was her 12-meter veil which beautifully complemented the Twenties style gown designed for her by Galit Levy.

MUCH as MK Uzi Baram and his new wife Aviva would have liked to make their nuptials a small family affair, they could not ignore the noblesse oblige of a public figure. So they literally and figuratively worked out a way to have their cake and eat it. They issued invitations for two receptions: the first was for family, close friends and some political cronies who came to witness the bridal ceremony at Mishkenot Sha'ananim, and the second will be a bigger bash tomorrow at Ramat Rahel.

ALTHOUGH it's considered bad luck in some circles for the bride and groom to see each other during the 24-hour period before the wedding, the Barams thumbed their noses at superstition, and turned up to participate in the festivities of Mevasseret Zion local council head Eli Mouyal and his wife Rahel, who married off Merav, the second of their four daughters, to Eran Mizrahi. One of the bride's sisters was married only two months earlier. The proximity of the two events was a great incentive for Rahel Mouyal to go on a diet — and the consensus was that she looked fantastic. Amongst the 500-plus guests who flocked to the Bible Lands Museum to rejoice with Merav and Eran were MKs Shimon Peres, Ophir Pines, Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, Rafi Edri and Sallah Yariv.

THE first local dignity to greet members of the Israel Bonds Task Force during their 56-hour visit to Israel was Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert. Bonds president and Olmert's former political cohort Gideon Patt was so moved by Olmert's speech that he spontaneously gave him a plug for the upcoming municipal elections, and whatever may come beyond. After Patt declared that Olmert has "presidential timbre," hizzoner was asked whether it was Ezer Weizman or Bibi Netanyahu whom he was aiming to replace. With an amused chuckle, Olmert replied: "I don't know."

DEFENSE Minister Yitzhak Mordechai did not tell the Israel Bonds leaders much that they did not already know, though he did emphasize that it is necessary to

achieve an agreement with the Palestinians, and he did assure them that such an agreement was close at hand. He also said that he was looking forward to renegotiating with Syria.

WHAT you see is not always what you get. Ronald van Wezel, director of operations at the Jerusalem Hilton, spent part of his career in Thailand and Indonesia, where he developed a keen appreciation for Far Eastern cuisine. Deciding to introduce it to the Israel Hiltons as a more affordable menu than that in the regular dining rooms, he and his staff decided to give it the catchy title of Wok and Roll. All the main courses are stir-fried in a wok and the appetizers are spring rolls. But some people who read the advertisement for the new menu thought that the hotel chain was being cutesy and that what it really meant, says van Wezel, was "Roll to Roll." When they came for dinner, they couldn't understand why there was no music!

IN the ongoing game of musical chairs between Channels 1 and 2, Motti Kirschbaum, the former director-general of the Israel Broadcasting Authority, has signed up with Channel 2 to do Friday night news features. This is what he used to do for Channel 1. And Shulamit Aloni, in her capacity as education minister, gave him the top job in the IBA. Kirschbaum has a special talent for injecting satire into his news reports, which may help him to fare better at Channel 2 than Chaim Yavin did.

INTERNAL Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani got a lot of flak from various politicians who called on him to resign after he reported that the police did not have the resources to combat the growing wave of crime. Kahalani, who called on the public to join the Civil Guard with a view to preventing or reducing burglaries and other crimes, put his money where his mouth was, and this week joined Civil Guard volunteers in pounding the streets of Tel Aviv. Kahalani, who brought entertainer Dudu Topaz with him to help set the example for community responsibility, was surrounded by so many security guards that the exercise was almost pointless. If Tel Aviv itself would have had the extra detail rather than the minister, it might have proved more effective. The publicity gimmick did little to enhance Kahalani's image, and proved damaging to Topaz, who later in the week was the subject of a Yediot Aharonot story which explained why he did not even meet Civil Guard criteria.

THE August edition of *The Seventh Eye*, the Israel Democracy Institute magazine about journalists and journalism, written by journalists for journalists, this month devoted not only its cover story but the whole publication to convicted *Ma'ariv* publisher Ofer Nimrodi, whose wiretapping commissions have earned him a stint in prison. Though it is generally understood that he may have to step down as publisher, Nimrodi may be pleased to learn that not everyone in the media believes that he should be penalized to this extent.

CHANGING sides on the microphone, Shai Bazzak, the former spokesman for the prime minister, was the guest interviewer on Dalia Ya'ari's morning program on Radio 2. An eligible bachelor, Bazzak, who is brushing up on his English before he takes up his new post as Israel's consul general in Miami, has already been guaranteed a warm welcome by the Jewish community, especially parents of marriageable daughters.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

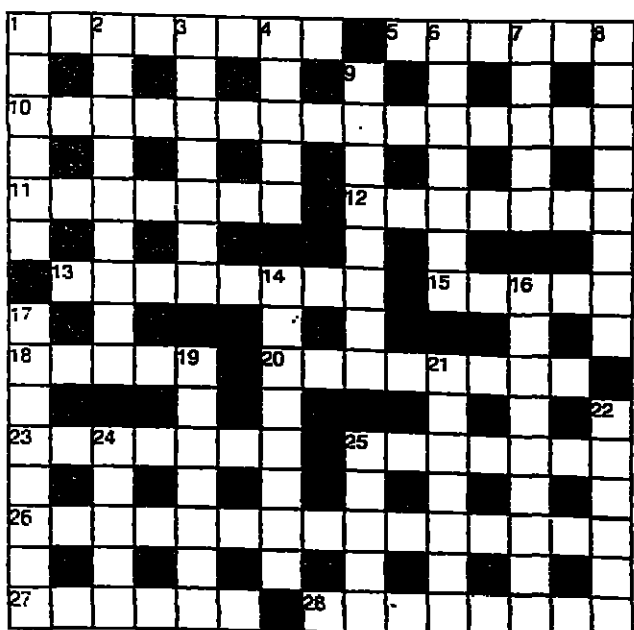
ACROSS

- 1 Anteater finds a way into Bible, with Noah's vessel (8)
- 5 Somewhat crazy, got enclosed in cell (6)
- 10 Stamp on this slow service, a poor job (6-5,4)
- 11 Almost offend a monarch that's narrow-minded (7)
- 12 Fabric, two-thirds light blue, a little cold (7)
- 13 Is greed a fault? Dissent (8)
- 15 Holy book found on Ark, perhaps (5)
- 18 Steal a tiny amount (5)
- 20 Render one's account (8)
- 23 One charging a small volume to employer (7)

- 25 Income in respect of meeting-place (7)
- 26 Dukes get no protection when argument gets serious (3,6,3,3)
- 27 Engineers extremely dainty repair (6)
- 28 Inflicted capital loss in block transaction (8)

DOWN

- 1 Animal to fall ill with attack (6)
- 2 Terrible crises—one is economic downturn (9)
- 3 From vehicle, I'll get a standard ice-cream (7)
- 4 One in a couple of runs? (5)
- 6 It keeps some features of Islam out of sight (7)



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ACROSS: 1 Banker, 4 Ridge, 8 Aging, 9 Traffic, 10 Thought, 11 Urge, 12 Str, 14 Mean, 15 Ease, 16 Gem, 21 Oast, 23 Abolish, 25 Flavour, 26 Usher, 27 Rupee, 28 Heave.
DOWN: 1 Hearty, 2 Noisome, 3 Engaging, 4 Real, 5 Defer, 6 Exposed, 7 State, 13 Resolute, 16 Silther, 17 Coffer, 19 Marry, 20 Church, 22 Sharp, 24 Sole.

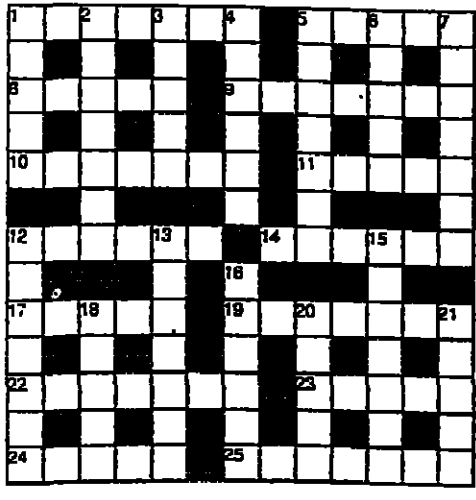
QUICK CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Conceded (7)
- 5 Opening (5)
- 8 Greek order (5)
- 9 Write poetry (7)
- 10 Brays (7)
- 11 Leonardo's birthplace (5)
- 12 Cavalryman (8)
- 14 Egyptian temple site (5)
- 17 Impressionist painter (5)
- 19 Rower (7)
- 22 Tiny drop (7)
- 23 Gave medicine (5)
- 24 Gulf state (5)
- 25 Ruling house (7)

DOWN

- 1 Religious sect (5)
- 2 Lamp (7)
- 3 Witchcraft (5)
- 4 Strip (6)
- 5 Country, now Czech (7)
- 6 Association (5)
- 7 Heap of dried grass (7)
- 12 Feast of the Annunciation (4,3)
- 13 Greek letter (7)
- 15 Goddess of vengeance (7)
- 16 Subsidized (5)
- 18 Oatler (5)
- 20 English forest (5)
- 21 Bigears' chum (5)



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Jerusalem Area

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Jerusalem Area

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Wimbledon, who have virtually the same roster as last season.

Inside

O'Meara goes after Hogan

Page 23

Sports Editors
Joe Hoffman & Ori Lewis

Toto Cup kicks off season

By OFER RONEN-ABELS

Israel's football teams go back into action this weekend as they enter the first stage of the Toto Cup.

Hapoel Kfar Saba begin the season today as they host Hapoel Jerusalem (kickoff at 17:00).

Tomorrow, Hapoel Beit She'an will field their under-18 team against hosts Betar Jerusalem at Teddy Stadium (18:00). The full squad was prohibited from playing because they failed to meet the I.F.A.'s budget approval.

Hapoel Tel Aviv, on the other hand, managed to find a solution 24 hours before the deadline and will play Bnei Yehuda (Bloomfield, 19:00). Neighbors Maccabi Jaffa also managed to get an approval in the last minute and will travel to Haifa to play Hapoel (Kiryat Eliezer 19:00).

Maccabi Tel Aviv switched venues and will play Ironi Rishon at Rishon's City Stadium (19:00). Ironi Ashdod travel to Herzliya to play Maccabi (17:30) and Hapoel Petah Tikva host city rivals Maccabi in what looks like the most interesting tie (17:00).



AIR BORNE - Bernie Williams watches his seventh-inning home run against Minnesota as the Yankees roll to another three-game sweep with an 11-2 win. David Cone won his 17th.

Johnson blanks Brewers, fans 13

HOUSTON (AP) - Even the great Nolan Ryan had to see Randy Johnson pitch in person.

A lively crowd of 40,217 - including Ryan sitting behind home plate - saw Johnson pitch his second straight shutout, striking out 13 as the Houston Astros beat the Milwaukee Brewers, 3-0

on Wednesday. Johnson (3-0) also singled for his first major league RBI in leading the Astros to their sixth straight win.

Making his third start since Houston got him in a trade with Seattle, Johnson gave up five hits in lowering his ERA to 0.72 for

the Astros. Johnson's 13 strikeouts were the most by a Houston pitcher this season. He also tied Sandy Koufax for second place on the career list for 10-plus strikeout games with 97 - Ryan leads with 215, and he joined in a standing ovation for Johnson at the final out.

Brad Woodall (5-7) pitched five innings for the loss.

Cubs 10, Giants 2. Henry Rodriguez homered twice and drove in five runs, and Steve Trachsel pitched seven strong innings for visiting Chicago.

See BASEBALL, Page 23

Benfica humiliate Betar, 6-0

By OFER RONEN-ABELS

Betar Jerusalem were humiliated after losing, 6-0 on Wednesday night to Benfica of Lisbon in the second preliminary round, first leg of the Champions league.

Some 50,000 Portuguese turned up to see Graeme Souness's side take Israel's champions and rip them apart in a display that would call into question the professionalism of Israeli football.

Betar's 'keeper cleared off his line following a clumsy header by Assi Domb in the 20th minute and that was the first sign of the confusion in Betar's defense.

Three minutes later, former Sheffield Wednesday star Mark Pembroke opened the scoring after reacting to a cross by Souza.

In the 28th minute, Souza collected a ball near the right corner flag. Calado confused Betar's defenders by spreading his legs, and Brian Deane was left to tap in and double the score.

Benfica kept on dominating the game and had a few more chances before the end of the first half but the score remained unchanged.

Four minutes into the second period, Domb kept his team in the game after a spectacular sliding tackle on his line that saved Betar from further embarrassment but could do nothing in the 63rd minute against a header that bounced onto Sergey Tartiack's hand. Callado converted the penalty that was pushed in by the fingertips of Itzik Kornfein.

A minute later saw the introduction of Eli Ohana after a long injury, but even a veteran of his caliber couldn't stop the rot as Benfica's players toyed with Betar's defense.

Scott Minto's cross, who moved from Chelsea in the summer, was accidentally met by another new summer signing, Amir Shelah who fired into his

own net to make it 4-0 in the 78th minute. Another three minutes passed and Minto's cross found Pembroke who beat Tartiack and Kornfein to score his second and Benfica's fifth.

Souness, also made a few changes by introducing local heroes Jao Pinto Nuno Gomes and former West Ham player Hugo Porfiri who all combined in the build up for Benfica's sixth goal.

Gomes passed the ball to Porfiri whose back heel flick left Pembroke behind Betar's line of defense. Ilan Bachar gave German referee Edgar Steinburn no choice as he pulled the little Welshman down inside the area and Gomes gave Kornfein no chance at all.

Betar's coach Dror Kashtan was very disappointed with the result and the performance while Stefan Salloi called his team's performance "a complete farce."

Souness, on the other hand said that "Wednesday is a very happy night for me and club as we completed a professional job by winning the tie in the first leg."

In last night's Cup Winners' Cup game, Maccabi Haifa beat hosts Glentoran of Northern Ireland 1-0 in front of 3,000 fans. Alon Mizrahi scored the winner in the 22nd minute of the first leg of the first preliminary round. The return leg will be played in Haifa on August 27.

Cup Winners' Cup - Last night's results:

In Cork: Cork City 2, CSKA Kiev 1 (Score: Cork City 2, Kevin Flanagan, 20th, Derek Coughlin, 32nd; CSKA - Sergiy Fylov, 93rd). Attendance: 4,500. In Tallinn: Levadia Tallinn (Estonia) 0, Hearts (Scotland) 1. Score: Lee Miller 2. Halftime 0-1; Attendance: 1,500. In Velenje: Rudar Velenje (Slovenia) 2, Construct (Moldova) 1. Score: Zvonko Veljovic 32, Peter Sumrak 90. Halftime 1-0; Attendance: 1,600. In Liepaja: Metalurgs Liepaja (Latvia) 4, Kallavik (Croatia) 2. Score: Liepaja - Rolands Bulders 61, 87, 88, Danis Magdishauskas 89; Kallavik - Marko Tanasik 60, Gaur Giltason 90. Halftime 0-0; Attendance: 5,000. In Skopje: Vardar (Macedonia) 0, Spartak Trnava (Slovakia) 1. Score: Jozak Urdak 76; Attendance: 10,000.

Big four set to dominate, but Hammers may strike

LONDON (AP) - Ian Wright in a West Ham shirt, Marcel Desailly lining up for Chelsea. Paul Gascoigne back in the Premier League.

English soccer has a different look for the new season kicking off this weekend but the same names are likely to come out at the top.

Defending champion Arsenal, runner-up Manchester United, third-place Liverpool and fourth-place Chelsea are likely to fill the top four places again when the season ends in May.

But in which order? If last weekend's Charity Shield is a guide, Arsenal still appear to have the measure of United after a 3-0 victory at Wembley. The Gunners beat the Reds at home and away last season as they wiped out United's 12-point lead to clinch the title.

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger has barely made a change to his lineup, only adding unheralded David Groudon to the growing list of French players on his roster.

But Wenger did sell Wright to West Ham on the basis that the 34-

year-old striker - Arsenal's all-time leading scorer - wouldn't have been guaranteed a starting place because of the form of

Gerard Houllier. The Merseyside club, whose last of a record 18 league titles was back in 1990, named Houllier to work alongside

current manager Roy Evans, who came in for criticism last season. With 18-year-old striker Michael Owen still getting rave reviews for his standout World Cup performance, Liverpool have the potential to win the title. But they've spent several seasons promising much but achieving little.

Cup Winners Cup holder Chelsea had another busy summer in the transfer market and has added some more big names to its already powerful roster. Danish striker Brian Laudrup, French World Cup star Desailly, Spanish defender Alberto Ferrer and Italian striker Pierluigi Casiraghi have joined the Blues, and Denis Wise might find himself the only Englishman on the team.

Newcastle, a major flop last season after finishing runner-up the previous two, don't look any stronger despite the arrival of Frenchman Stephane Guivarc'h.

Liverpool's biggest and most surprising recruit was former French national team coach

See PREMIER, Page 23

NJ to rule today on Tyson return

TRENTON (AP) - He's a convicted rapist who once bit an opponent's ears. He couldn't even control himself when he came to repent.

Then again, he's a heavyweight fighter who makes his living with his fists and his unpredictability. He was licensed to fight even after serving a three-year prison term, but then paid for biting Evander Holyfield with a \$3 million fine and a forced one-year sabbatical.

Is Mike Tyson fit to return to boxing - again? That's the question facing New Jersey regulators, who will decide today whether the former heavyweight champion has paid for his attack on Holyfield's ears last year.

Tyson, 32, hasn't fought since the June 28, 1997 bout, which led Nevada regulators to revoke his boxing license. Now he's asking

New Jersey to reinstate him.

The state Athletic Control Board, which heard nearly four hours of testimony from Tyson and his supporters last month, will vote on whether Tyson possesses the "good character, honesty, integrity and responsibility" required by state boxing law.

The case is being watched closely - by boxing insiders, the casino industry, regulators in New York and Nevada, even the National Organization for Women. Many of those parties have weighed in with New Jersey officials.

In one corner are those who believe Tyson has been punished enough for the bizarre biting, that he deserves a chance to return to the ring.

"The man paid \$3 million, one of the biggest

fines in the history of sports," said boxing promoter Cedric Kushner, who is not affiliated with Tyson. "The man was off for 12 months. I think absolutely, he should be entitled to resume his career. His clock is ticking."

In the other corner are those who say Tyson's checkered past - the rape of a beauty pageant contestant, the attack on Holyfield, the angry performance before the New Jersey board - demonstrate that he is too dangerous even for the most brutal of sports.

"Everyone deserves a second chance, but this isn't a second chance," said Bear Atwood, president of the National Organization for Women's New Jersey chapter.

"We've lost count of how many chances this is."

Sampras on track to reclaim top ranking

MASON, OH (AP) - Pete Sampras' plans for his 27th birthday were as low-key as his 6-4, 6-2 victory on Wednesday over Martin Damm of the Czech Republic in the \$2.45 million ATP Champion-ship.

Successfully defending his title here would assure Sampras of returning to the No. 1 ranking next week. He could regain it just by making the finals, if the match contained enough bonus points for the ATP formula.

Certainly the reign of Marcelo Rios of Chile, who assumed the top ranking on Monday, appeared doomed. He lost his first match in straight sets Tuesday night.

The tournament lost four more seeds Wednesday, leaving just six

was hold serve.

"I just didn't put the match away," Agassi said. "I missed an easy forehand, then a backhand ... and he played solid from there."

Jerome Golmard of France ousted the French Open champion,

Marcos Ondruska of South Africa 6-2, 6-3; Jan Siemerink of the Netherlands dined Wayne Ferreira of South Africa 7-6 (7-5), 6-4; and Yevgeny Kafelnikov of Russia beat Michael Chang 6-3, 4-6, 6-4.

Also, fifth-seeded Patrick Rafter of Australia beat Guillaume Raoux of France 6-1, 6-3; Thomas Johansson of Sweden defeated Jeff Tarango 5-7, 6-2, 7-6 (7-4); and 14th-seeded Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia beat Mark Philippoussis of Australia, 6-3, 6-2.

Hings tops Majoli at Acura Classic

Top-seeded Martina Hingis spoiled Iva Majoli's birthday when she beat the 1997 French Open champion 6-3, 6-3 in the second round of the Acura Classic women's tennis tournament at Manhattan Beach, California.

Majoli, who turned 21, made Hingis work for the victory, keeping the world's No. 1 player on the court for 71 minutes.

Earlier, defending champion Monica Seles, ailing back and all, breezed to a 6-1, 6-2 victory over Austria's Barbara Paulis.

Wheelchair Tennis Tournament

The Globus-Jerusalem Wheelchair Tennis Tournament will be held today and tomorrow at the Israel Tennis Center, Katamon. Matches will begin at 10:00. The awards ceremony will take place tomorrow at 17:30.

f the original 16. Richard Krajicek of Netherlands, the No. 8 seed, beat Andrei Medvedev of Ukraine 6-3, 7 (5-7), 6-3. But 11th-seeded Andre Agassi was eliminated by Vince Spadea 6-2, 0-6, 7-6 (7-2). Agassi seemed to have the match in his pocket after breaking Spadea's service in the ninth game of the final set. All he had to do

fourth-seeded Carlos Moya of Spain, 6-4, 6-2; Tommy Haas of Germany beat 12th-seeded Albert Costa of Spain 6-1, 6-3; and Scott Draper of Australia defeated ninth-seeded Alex Corretja of Spain 6-3, 6-7 (5-7), 7-6 (7-5).

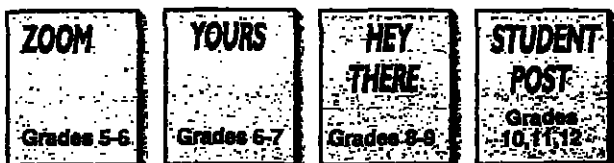
In other matches, Todd Martin defeated Thomas Muster of Austria 6-3, 6-4; third-seeded Petr Korda of the Czech Republic beat

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By DAVID RUDGE

The daylight infiltration of the Israeli security forces by a Hizbullah gunman who escaped alone was a "serious operational failure," Chief of Staff Gen. Shaul Mofaz has determined following his own inquiry into what became known as the "Solef" operation - an effort and two men - involved.

He ordered the platoon commander dismissed and that the soldiers should no longer serve in the paratrooper company.

He also instructed that the names be noted in the record books of the soldiers involved in the operation. Erez Gerstein, head of the Lebanon Liaison Unit, and battalion commander Lt. Col. Hani

Mofaz determined that there were flaws in preparing the operation and the senior officers were not sufficiently involved. Mofaz conducted his inquiry after receiving the report of the command's investigation into the incident, which occurred last Sunday evening.